

628

Clements Parson green
fulham 3474

N 100
New Bond Street,
THOMAS JOHNSON BOOKS
Circulating Library.
Containing 40,000 Volumes IN.

BOOKS LENT.

Clements Parson

onery and Drawing Materials

SOLD.

green fulham

Drawing Taught

ABROAD OR AT HOME.

D 9

628

Clements Parson green
fulham 3474

N 100
New Bond Street,
THOMAS JONES BOOKS
Circulating Library.
Containing 40,000 Volumes IN.

BOOKS LENT.

Clements Parson

onery and Drawing Materials

SOLD.

green fulham

Drawing Taught

ABROAD OR AT HOME.

D 9

12614. 66. 8.

THE
HISTORY
OF
Mr. CHARLES CHANCE,
AND
Miss CLARA VELLUM.

Forse non senza utilità degli ascoltanti, aggiungero alle dette una mia Novella.

Boc.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY CÆSAR WARD,
FOR
FRANCIS NOBLE, at his Circulating Library, near *Middle-
Row Holborn*;
AND
JOHN NOBLE, at his Circulating Library, in *St. Martin's
Court, near Leicester-Square*,
MDCCLXVII.

THE
HISTORICAL
OF
MR. CHARLES CHANCE,
AND
THE GREAT VILLUM.



THE GREAT VILLUM
AND THE HISTORY OF THE
MUSEUM

LONDON:
PRINTED BY CHARLES WARD
FOR
J. H. B. & CO. 10, ABINGDON STREET, NEW MARKET
AND
J. H. B. & CO. 10, ABINGDON STREET, NEW MARKET
1850

TO THE
READER.

THERE are some characters in this little piece sketched from originals in real life, but as I had no intention to divert myself at the expence of individuals, however I may have made free with their follies, those characters are so disguised by change of place or circumstance, that should any

one recognize his own features,
he may, if he pleases, keep
his secret to himself.

The merit of the work must
be determined by the reader,
and whatever that determina-
tion may be, if there appear in
it marks of candour and im-
partiality, it will be satisfactory
to

Norwich,
1st October, 1766.

JOHN ROBINSON.

THE
HISTORY
OF
CHARLES CHANCE.
CHAP. I.

*Containing variety of matter introductory to
the following history, and many things
which it is highly necessary the reader
should be acquainted with.*

IT was a little before sun-set one fine
summer evening, that Mr. Worthy (a
gentleman who had retired from business,
and settled in a pleasant village in the
West of England) was walking in the
B fields

fields to enjoy the pleasing serenity that the agreeable prospects with which he was surrounded must infuse into a mind blest with a consciousness of innocence like his. He had not walked far ere he was alarmed by shrieks from a female voice, and hastening towards the place from whence the sound proceeded, he beheld a woman sinking in the middle of the river which flowed through the adjoining meadow. He rushed instantly into the water, and had the good fortune to get her out alive, though speechless and almost expiring; a servant who had heard the shrieks, and was by this time come up, he dispatched home for proper assistance. In the mean time the fair stranger's senses returned enough to let her perceive the situation she was in, and by means of the family's assistance,

istance, she quickly recovered so as to thank Mr. Worthy for her preservation, and to accept his invitation of going to his house, and his coach was immediately sent for, as she was not able to walk.

It was evident enough from the situation in which the stranger had been found, that she must have voluntarily thrown herself into the river; but Mr. Worthy forbore enquiring what cause could have tempted her to suicide, as she was at present not fit to answer questions, and seemed greatly in need of rest. The females, indeed, of Mr. Worthy's family were extremely eager to know every circumstance concerning her, which impertinent curiosity could put in their heads to ask, but his express command to the contrary prevented their enquiries; they

4 THE HISTORY OF

had only learned from her while they attended her to bed, that she was of a good family and fortune, (which indeed her appearance bespoke her) that she had fled from her parents without their knowledge, and that she had been disappointed in her expectations of a refuge; the cause of her flight her modesty had concealed; but if it was not then surmised, it was no longer a secret than till the next morning, when she was seized with pains of childbirth, and delivered of a fine boy. The fatigues she had undergone, and her anxiety of mind, which had helped to hasten on her time of delivery, rendered her unable to overcome the danger which attended it; and without having time or ability to make herself further known, she unhappily expired. Thus early was I left an orphan

phan (for it must not be concealed that this was my mother) to be bred amongst strangers, deprived of a parent's fondness and care, and to risk the miseries of life, without the usual prospect of its blessings; but I became by these means the more immediate care of that Providence, which is a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless.

Mr. Worthy took care to perform the last Duties to my mother; and thinking it cruel, considering the station in life she had seemingly filled, to intrust me to the care of a parish, generously determined to give me a decent education at his own expence; a nurse was soon provided me, and I was taken proper care of during my infancy, and when this was past I was sent to school, and directed to be assidu-

6 THE HISTORY OF

ous in acquiring whatever knowledge might be necessary to help me with more ease through the world, as that knowledge was likely to be all my fortune, and as I should probably rise or fall according as I was or was not possessed of it. As I had a natural bent towards study, and a tolerable capacity, I passed through the several classes at school with pleasure and reputation, and acquired the good-will of my fellow pupils by good-natured offices which I occasionally did them; and being of an enterprising spirit, I was at the head of every frolic they undertook, and the more hazardous the exploit, the more credit it procured me, for they always found me willing to be their leader, so that they often declared they would not fear attacking

ing

CHARLES CHANCE. 7

ing the whole parish, if they had but Charles Chance (which was the name Mr. Worthy had given me) at their head. Some little inconveniencies would accrue from this preeminence, the blame and punishment falling almost entirely to my share; and the danger of the attempt being disregarded by me, I had more than once the satisfaction to receive a hearty drubbing; particularly, when half a dozen of us secreted ourselves in a neighbouring farmer's house while he was absent, and when he returned at night, while my companions made a dismal groaning in their turking places, I stalked towards him wrapp'd in a sheet, in hopes to have put him to flight, but the resolute countryman snatching up a large stick, fell to beating me so in earnest, that I was quick-

3 THE HISTORY OF

ly stretched on the ground, and bellowed out for mercy with all my might, lest a few more strokes should make an end of me. We were suffered to depart on asking his pardon and receiving a reprimand, but our school-master took his turn next day to chastise us all. Nevertheless I must own that the years I passed at school were happier than any since; care and anxiety seldom oppressed my thoughts, and youth with a good constitution rendered me superior to fatigue.

Thus happily my time passed on till my fourteenth year, when to my very great mortification, my excellent benefactor Mr. Worthy died; he had made no provision for me, but had recommended me with his dying breath to young Mr. Worthy his son, who now came to the possession of
his

CHARLES CHANCE. 9

his estate. Young and simple as I was, my gratitude to my late benefactor, and my dependence on the young heir, led me to write this last a letter of condolance a few days after the interment of his father, with a request he would continue in some measure my protector, that I might not be left friendless and exposed to the dangers of the world, at an age so unfit to struggle with them; I left him room to guess I was desirous to pay him my respects in person, as I had been used to do to his father, but did not plainly ask leave; for as he had been educated very politely, and bore the character of a fine gentleman (at least the sumptuousness of his appearance whenever he had visited at his father's had gained him that character) I was not certain whether he would have taken such a

TO THE HISTORY OF

request well or ill. My letter was no sooner received, than I had an order to attend Mr. Worthy. Pleased with the invitation, and big with expectations of its consequences, I dressed myself in the best manner I was able, and hastened to know his pleasure. He was alone when I was introduced to him, and seeing me enter, bade me come towards him, and ordered the servant to retire. I think, said he, my father took care of you ever since your birth, and he has recommended you to my protection; for which reason I sent for you, to enquire of you in what manner I can fulfil my father's desire most agreeably to yourself. I expressed my sense of his kindness in the warmest terms of acknowledgment, and concluded with assuring him that I had no particular scheme
of

CHARLES CHANCE. 11

of life in view, and should be satisfied with whatever he thought most convenient, having no other reliance than on his generosity! Well then, replied he, as you have been long enough at school, and are now grown a stout lad, I think you may now venture to look out for a situation in the world. You have perhaps no inclination to a trade, and I think it better if you have not; but as at present I don't know any gentleman to whom I can recommend you, take this purse, there are five guineas in it; they will support you till you hear of somebody who wants a servant, and I doubt not but you will make a good one. So saying, he wished me well, and left me.

It is impossible to express the consternation I was in at hearing these words, at

I had reason to think from my treatment hitherto, that if Mr. Worthy had lived he would have provided for me in a far more reputable manner; it was in vain, however, to complain where there were no hopes of a remedy. I quitted the house therefore with disdain, yet not without tears, which flowed from me far less on account of my present usage, than at the remembrance of the many happy hours I had formerly spent there with the truly good and hospitable owner. I now walked back to my school with a heavy heart, but as I could not think of asking any favours from my master, who was so accustomed to flog his pupils, that he had erased almost all impressions of pity from his mind, I tied my clothes in a bundle, and took my leave of my school-fellows,

fellows, without acquainting them with the state of my affairs.

CH A P. II.

Which if the reader does not like, he has the author's leave to find fault with it.

IT was towards evening when I set out, and I fauntered on, undetermined whether to go, and revolving a thousand schemes in my mind, without fixing on any one, when I was overtaken by a man on foot, who was going to a market town a few miles before us. After mutual enquiries about each other's journey, we agreed to travel thither together, and my companion, who was a facetious fellow, alleviated by his discourse the anxiety I laboured under, and which perhaps he perceived,

perceived, though I endeavoured to conceal it, not caring to repeat the unlucky circumstances I already had but too much cause to think of. We supped that night at an alehouse in the town, and I began to have some intention of going forward towards London the next morning. After supper my companion proposed, as the cheapest method, that we should have but one bed, which I readily consented to, as it was not adviseable that I should spend what little money I had extravagantly. As I had now made a kind of determination, my mind was a little more at ease, and I went to bed and slept soundly till morning. It was daylight when I awoke, and my fellow-traveller I found was risen before me. I hurried on my cloaths and went down
stairs

stairs to seek him; but as nobody could give me any intelligence of him, I break-
 ed alone, and finding I had two shillings
 to pay, I put my hand into my pocket to
 get my purse, but to my very great sur-
 prise it was not there. Every circum-
 stance now of my companion's behaviour,
 his joining company with me, his propo-
 sal for our lying together, and his present
 absence, rushed on my mind at once, and
 convinced me that he had picked my
 pocket whilst I was asleep; our arriving
 together the preceding night, and our
 seeming acquaintance left no doubt in the
 landlord of this being a premeditated
 scheme to cheat him, though I asserted the
 truth in the most vehement terms, and he
 in consequence insisted that I should give
 him something to the value of what I
 owed

owed him, or let him sell some part of my clothes to procure me money enough to discharge my reckoning. I had half a dozen shirts, one of which I gave him; and as he valued it at three shillings, he paid me one and let me go. I now walked about the town, vexed at my folly and for the loss of my money, when a well-dressed man, seeing me a stranger with a bundle under my arm, obligingly asked me who I wanted, and offered his service to direct me; he was prepossessed in my favour, he said, by my appearance, and desired my acquaintance if I was come to stay there. In return for so much civility I could not refuse complying with his request, so informed him in few words that I wanted employment. On hearing this, he again repeated his offers of serving
me,

me, and desired to know my name and whence I came. I had no sooner satisfied him in these points, than he shook me by the hand, and was overjoyed to see the son of his old friend Mr. Chance; he hoped my father was still living and well; he had not seen him, he said, since I was a child, and insisted on my dining with him at a tavern before we parted. I had been once, as the phrase is, *taken in*, and had I not, it required no great share of prudence to suspect some roguery here, as I was confident no such person as his friend Mr. Chance had lived in the village I came from. I was, however, in want of friends and advice, and was resolved to endeavour at turning this man's knavery to my own advantage; and should I even be obliged to use him a little unfairly, I believed

lieved it was justifiable enough, as there was so strong a presumption of his intending me some foul play.

I dissembled my suspicions of my new acquaintance, and thanking him for his kind enquiries about my father, who, I told him, was well, I agreed to his proposal. After some little discourse on indifferent matters, I affected to pause a few moments, and surveying him well, told him I was greatly mistaken in my conjecture, if his name was not Wilkins, and begged he would satisfy my curiosity to know it. He replied, tho' not without some meditation, that I had guessed his name, which he ought, he confessed, to have acquainted me with before, but had forgot to do it, tho' he could not but ask how I knew it. My father, I answered, had

had frequently mentioned his friend Mr. Wilkins, and by the description he had given me, I had concluded him to be that gentleman, and that I should have mentioned it when he first spoke of knowing my father, but that I understood Mr. Wilkins lived about twenty miles off. This difficulty was soon cleared up, by his assuring me he had not indeed changed his abode more than a twelve-month.

Mr. Wilkins, as he called himself, no way doubting but I had money about me, soon after led me to a tavern, where, after we had dined, he proposed our passing an hour over a game at cards. It seemed now high time for us to understand each other, and for that reason I bespoke his attention to something serious, which I had to inform him. I told him
plainly.

plainly, that for very cogent reasons I had suspected him of an intention to impose on me, even from his first addressing me, that in order to be convinced, I had pretended to think he was my father's friend, Wilkins, whom I knew he was not, which snare he had not had discernment enough to avoid; that is now proposing cards, fully satisfied me, that he desired to disburthen me of what money I might have with me; that if he had an inclination to prove to me, that he had not given up every principle of honesty, he would ingenuously own that I had really suspected the truth, and strengthen my belief of his generosity, by endeavouring to serve me, who was really in distress, and that I would promise him

him in return, not to divulge what had passed betwixt us.

Mr. Wilkins listened very attentively while I was speaking, and sat silent yet a few minutes, considering what kind of answer to make me; I dare say he thought me possessed of a great deal of sagacity, as well as rhetoric, for a youth of my seeming age, and indeed I had delivered my harangue with earnestness, and urged my reasons as strongly as I possibly could; a sense of the importance of my having a friend when I was greatly in want of one, had enabled me to surpass my usual manner of discourse, in hopes of procuring a friend in Mr. Wilkins.

After pausing a while, he asked me, if I was in earnest, and on my answering him in the affirmative, Let me tell you,
then,

then, replied he, that all I have said is really true, and that I doubt not you are the impostor, and have assumed the name of Chance, without any title to it; I therefore scorn to associate with you any longer. He was in effect walking away, without any further explanation, when reflecting on the state of my finances, I stepped after him, and insisted on his paying for his dinner. To this he made no reply, but by damning me for a scoundrel, and again hastened towards the door, when the noise of our altercation brought a gentleman from another room, who, with the master of the house, proved an overmatch for the sharper, and compelled him to contribute his quota before he departed.

The

The person we had disturbed was a lawyer, his name Vellum, who finding me a smart lad, and hearing some particulars of my story, offered, as I was in want, to employ me in copying writings for him, which, as his business was not very extensive, I afterwards found saved him the expence of a regular clerk. The reader will easily imagine was not slow in accepting this offer, tho' Mr. Vellum proposed, that I should have only half a guinea *per* month, and my board. We soon made our agreement, and I followed Mr. Vellum home, where, after being viewed by the family, and shewn the garret, in which I was to lie, I was immediately set about business, that Mr. Vellum might have an early specimen of my clerk-like abilities.

CH A P.

CHAP. III.

Which contains both prose and verse.

MR. Vellum was remarkably unhand-
some in his person; a monstrous
exuberance of chin gave a displeasing
appearance to his face, he was awkward,
but extremely proud, and had airs of af-
fectionation to the highest degree; he had
very little learning, but was over de-
sirous to pass for a wit, yet common
sense was dealt to him very sparingly.
As I was subservient to him, I was
constrained to flatter him sometimes,
which, as I could not but despise him
in my heart, was extremely irksome to
me, especially as I had never been ac-
customed to disguise my thoughts, but
had always dared to use a becoming
freedom,

freedom, and speak of men as I found them.

I was soon informed of several little manual duties that were allotted to my performance, and as some of them might most properly have ranked with those of a footman, I was not a little disgusted at them, yet I persevered in the performance of them four or five years, not much repining at the loss of time, as I was young, and waiting patiently some happy reverse of fortune.

Mr. Vellum, who was not yet thirty years of age, still belonged to a spouting club, of which he had commenced member during his clerkship. Mrs. Vellum, a precise starch'd lady, was extraordinarily averse in her heart to this proceeding of her husband's; but as he held the reins

C

of

of government in his family with a firm hand, she was obliged to suppress her murmurs, both in this and in every other affair where Mr. Vellum's will thwarted her's.

A great part of Mr. Vellum's time being employed in preparations for his evening's exhibitions at the club, and his other affairs being frequently postponed, I had a very considerable deal of leisure; and as I was not qualified to associate with the neighbouring clerks and shopmen, (wanting a pair of ruffles and silver-laced waistcoat) I was contented to spend some hours every day in reading, which, strange as it may appear, I had acquired a taste for even when at school; my school-master, having once been usher in a grammar school, had taught me, as well as two or
three

three others, Latin and Greek at his own school, so that I had a fair opportunity from that circumstance, and my present leisure, of making considerable advances in learning, and I did not in the least neglect it.

Mr. Vellum having accidentally found out that I had a smattering of literature, had curiosity to make a trial of my taste; and accordingly taking me with him into a backward room, acquainted me with his intention, and did me the honour to let me hear him speak half a dozen of Hamlet's speeches. I cannot say that he really merited the commendation I bestowed on him, but I praised his performance with so good a grace, that he declared he had seldom met with so judicious a critic on theatrical elocution as I was. I

had from this time very frequent occasions to exercise my critical faculty; for whenever a new character or a new scene tempted Mr. Vellum to study, I was very sure to be consulted on his manner of speaking, and as sure to commend him, so that I began to be so far a favourite as to be admitted to dine with my master and mistress, and to enjoy some other privileges of equal importance. One day at dinner Mr. Vellum was lavishing encomiums on a prologue which had been composed by a member of the spouting club, and, as he had written three or four copies of verses himself in one of the magazines, he took occasion to introduce the mention of them, and to enumerate the beauties they contained. He was in very good humour, and vouchsafed to

ask

ask me if I had ever attempted any thing in the poetical way; I answered him by producing the manuscript of a poem which I had very lately wrote, and by begging his opinion of it, and more particularly requested, as it was an imitation of Virgil, that he would observe whether the imitations were well or ill performed. He had never read Virgil, he confessed, except in Dryden's translation; but as he made no doubt of that being equal, if not superior to the original, he was sure of being a very competent judge; it was folly, he assured us, to trouble one's self to learn other languages, when every thing was written so much better in our own. I did not think proper to make any objection to what he asserted, and

therefore, when dinner was over, read,
as he desired me, the following poem.

The Modern SILENUS.

Two youths that chanc'd along the streets to stray,
When bleak December chill'd the short-liv'd day,
Compell'd by beating tempests to retire,
Sought the warm comfort of a tavern fire;
The tuneful songster — they met with there,
* Wrapt in soft slumber in an elbow chair;
The drunkard's hand sustain'd his glass no more,
† That with his pipe lay broken on the floor,
Gladly they seiz'd him, for the knave had long
‡ Mock'd them with empty promise of a song,
Then 'woke him, and of all excuses tir'd,
The promis'd song with eagerness requir'd.

* Chromis & Mnasilus in antro
Silenum pueri somno videre jacentem.
† Serta procul tantum capiti delapsa jacebant.
‡ Nam saepe senex spe carminis ambo
Luserat.

Yawning

CHARLES CHANCE. 31

Yawning he rub'd his eyes, and feign'd a smile,
 Tho' disappointment anger'd him the while;
 Why would ye force a song, my sons? he cry'd,
 Thought ye a song to you had been deny'd?
 Whate'er I promise, still I keep my word;
 Take then such carols as my parts afford.
 || Our hostess there, that leering laughing jade,
 Is promis'd more — and she too shall be paid.

Straight he began — on every side a throng
 You might have seen attentive to his song;
 ¶ Wits of all sizes crowded round to hear,
 And gravest politicians lent an ear;
 † Not play-houle warblers such attention claim
 From critic bean, or modish city dame,

(Though these in solemn silence be detain'd)
 As from this motley crew our songster gain'd.

¶ Huic aliud mercedis erit. but in the poem
 ¶ Cum vero in numerum faunosque feraeque videres
 Ludere.

† Nec tantum Phœbo gaudet Parnassia rupes,
 Nec tantum Rhodope mirantur & Ismarus Orphea.

Of Britain first he sung, around whose shores,
 Source of her power and riches, Ocean roars,
 Trac'd out her steps to greatness and to fame,
 And dwelt with joy on every hero's name,
 In arduous lays again our battles fought,
 Edward's superior deeds at Cressly wrought,
 Thy conquests, Henry, not achiev'd in vain,
 For humbled Gallia wore the victor's chain.

I was going on, had not Mr. Vellum
 desired me to desist. He never heard, he
 swore heartily, a more stupid perfor-
 mance, and did not chuse to be troubled
 with any more of it. I was very much
 chagrin'd at the reception my poem met
 with, but mustered up courage enough
 to tell him that it was not want of merit
 in the poem, but want of judgment in
 him, which prevented his being pleased;
 and saying this, I walked out of the
 room.

I had

I had no difficulty in guessing what effect this would have on Mr. Vellum; but as if Fortune had resolved to do me all the mischief in her power, I was so unlucky in taking my poem out of my pocket, as to draw out with it another paper, which I dropt without perceiving it. As soon as I had left the room Mr. Vellum found this paper, and having read it, followed me immediately, and with passionate menaces turned me out of his house.

I at first imagined his anger proceeded solely from the affront I had offered him; but missing the paper I had lost, and which I then remembered to have seen in his hand, I had no further doubts as to the principal cause. In truth this paper was no other than a letter to me from a niece of Mr. Vellum's, between

bonifacio

C 5

whom

whom and myself, from parity of years and temper, and esteem for each other's qualifications and person, so strong an affection had taken root, as seemed beyond the power of any thing to eradicate; and Clara had not at all concealed her aversion to her uncle's character, nor her esteem for mine, but had frankly confessed both in their greatest extent, in the letter which her uncle had pick'd up.

Fate, which had united our hearts, had laid insuperable obstacles to the uniting our hands at present, as not only we were both under age, but as her rank in life was greatly superior to mine, and her fortune in the power of her parents to bestow.

The generosity of her sentiments, unrestrained

restrained by the narrow shackles of avarice, had made her neglect the difference of rank betwixt us, when she first thought me worthy of her esteem, and when by repeated proofs she was fully convinced that my tenderness for her was in all respects equal to that she entertained for me, she despised the prudishness of concealing an affection that was far from criminal, and avowed it to me ever after. Prudence had, indeed, obliged her to hide it from the jealous eyes of her father and mother, and our intercourse was chiefly carried on by letter; but the foregoing accident having put a letter of her's into her uncle's hands, I took care to have the following letter conveyed to her as soon as possible, not having it in my power to see her.

no

C 6

My

My dear Clara!

A letter of yours has unfortunately fallen into your uncle's hands; in consequence of this I am dismissed from his service, and tho' I am no way troubled on my own account, except for my being deprived of seeing you, yet I am anxious about the ill treatment you may perhaps undergo. I know not what to advise you to, but to make what concessions you are able, in which I can trust in your own discretion to direct you. It will answer no good end to you or me, should I stay here longer; I shall therefore immediately repair to London, and doubt not, however displeasing the prospect is which we now have before us, that our fate will some time or other wear a more promising appearance. I am sure you will readily

join

join with me in hoping this, and patiently wait the event. Happiness in few cases is in our power, perhaps only in that of being resigned to the will of providence, and supporting adversity with firmness, which may afford the mind more happiness in the consciousness of its superiority, than prosperity with all its fair delusions can furnish.

Whoever sinks under the hand of adversity, is undoubtedly miserable. Oh! summon then, my Clara, all your fortitude; endure the reproaches you will be loaded with, without repining; and bear the pains of absence by the pleasing certainty, that neither time, nor absence, shall ever abate the affection of,

Yours, most faithfully,

C. CHANCE.

The

The moment I had dispatched this letter, I set out for London, and with little more money than would serve me a week arrived at that scene of hurry and dissipation, unrecommended, and unknown, without a likelihood of being able to provide for myself, but by some menial office, which I should blush to undertake.

CHAP. IV.

*Containing grave and weighty matters,
which may be read in a few minutes.*

THE next morning after my arrival in London, when I had sauntered about some hours, chance led me to St. James's park. I was admiring the beauty of the place, when a formal gentleman, dressed in black, asked me what I did there.

there. I was for a moment surprized at the question, but looking earnestly in his face, I recollected the features of a journeyman baker whom I had formerly known in the neighbourhood of Mr. Vellum. When I had satisfied him as to myself, I could not avoid enquiring what had caused the very extraordinary metamorphosis he had undergone. To this he replied, in a canting tone, That the Lord had been pleased to recal him from the broad and beaten path that leads to destruction, that his good friend Evangelist had met him, as he did his predecessor Christian, and pointed his way to the strait gate, and that he was now running the race which was set before him; nay more, that like another Great-Heart, he

was

was now conducting widows and children to the New Jerusalem.

I had never perused Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, and therefore did not fully comprehend the meaning of this elegant speech, and I had no suspicion that of a baker, he was become a preacher of the gospel, as I was very confident he was extremely illiterate, and as I knew he had been dismissed from his master's service for dishonesty; but I soon learned the particulars from him in words a little more intelligible; and as I had formerly done him good offices, especially in having prevailed with his master to discharge him without prosecution, he offered me his interest to serve me in worldly matters, and hoped, he said, I would consider my ways, and be wise, and submit myself to his

his spiritual direction. I did not think fit to affront a man who professed a friendship for me, and therefore made him an answer, which I believe he construed into a confession, that I should not be very unwilling to become a profelyte. He then invited me to go with him to hear his sermon that evening, when he should have an opportunity to see pious Mrs. Praywell, Sir James Lordly's house-keeper, who was a tender-hearted christian, and on his account would recommend me to Sir James, who having a great deal of interest, might probably procure me some employment, especially as I was skilled in the learning of this world, and as Mrs. Praywell was a favourite of Sir James's.

I would

I would willingly have dispensed with hearing this fellow preach; but as this seemed the first step towards my promotion, I determined to keep up appearances, and follow him, as he requested, reflecting that I was but acting the part for once, which thousands perform daily, as perhaps even did my companion, which was wearing the mask of religion, in order to compass pecuniary ends.

When his sermon, if such it might be called, was finished, he beckoned Mrs. Praywell to follow him out, which she did, dropping her sixpence into the box at the door, as she came: he then recommended me in a long speech, conceived, in his usual hypocritical strain, to the protection of pious Mrs. Praywell, who, after mentioning her readiness to oblige him,

him, the painful labourer in the Lord's vineyard, and expressing her joy to behold a new brother in the Spirit, directed me to wait on her the next morning at eleven, when she would give me a recommendation to Sir James. I thanked her for her civility, promised to be punctual, and departed to pass the remainder of the evening with the preacher.

We had scarcely entered the house where my companion lodged, when our ears were grated with outcries for help: and we quickly overheard the good man of the house horse-whipping his wife. You impudent strumpet, cried he, as he lashed her, was not the fellow shut up in the closet when I came home? Didn't I but last week forgive you when I caught you in bed with the methodist parson? Didn't I let
him

him stay in his lodgings when you promised to do so no more? and here already to be at the same trade again! At hearing these words, my friend seemed a little confused; but recollecting himself, he, with a solemn look and uplifted hands; declared, his landlord must surely be out of his senses, to charge him with so wicked a deed; but as it was an improper time to speak to him at present, he would rebuke him for it the next day; and, heaven be praised, cried he, that none of those who are my foes overheard him, for they might have believed the words of his mouth.

I was now convinced of what I something suspected, that this was really a wolf in sheep's cloathing, but I thought best to dissemble; and the husband having,
thro'

thro' compassion, or weariness, desisted from exercising the whip, silence was restored in the house, and after an hour or two of conversation, my host suffered me to depart, as he said, in peace.

I was returning to the inn where I was to lie, and had not walked far, when a man seized me by the throat, and attempted to throw me down, but I was not a stripling, and soon disengaged myself, and holding my adversary fast, dealt him two or three forcible strokes, and brought him to the ground. As it was dark, the watch were in the streets, and the fellow who had attacked me, finding he had the worst of the dispute, roared out for help, and two of the watchmen coming up, he laid a charge against me of having assaulted him, with an intention

tion to rob or murder him. I was now uppermost, and appearances were undoubted against me, but as I insisted that I was the party attacked, the watchmen seized us both to conduct us to the round-house. They presently, indeed, suffered my fellow-prisoner to escape; and this incident, with a shilling which I gave each of them, under pretext of paying them for their trouble, procured my liberty, which I thought worth obtaining at that rate, rather than be confined, as I should else have been, till the next day.

In the morning I prepared to wait on Mrs. Praywell. I could not but think myself extremely lucky to have so fair a prospect of being provided for; when I had so little reason to expect it. I promised myself much from the eagerness
with

with which she had accepted her pastor's commission, and the favour she was in with her master. Precisely at the appointed hour, I repaired to Sir James's, and was immediately introduced to my patroness, who, taking me aside, acquainted me she had spoke to her master on my behalf, and had mentioned me as her cousin, who was lately come to town to seek a place, and as an amazing great scholar, who was fit for any place he could procure me, and that he had ordered I should attend him personally. I made my acknowledgments to Mrs. Praywell for her very elegant recommendation of me; and, after making me taste a cordial she kept for her own use, and for that of her good pastor, whenever he visited her, she left me, in order to inquire of her master whether he chose

chose then to see me. She returned with orders for my attending him immediately, and I was shewn to the room where he was at breakfast.

If thou hast ever seen, gentle reader, some one of the honourable fraternity of tragedians, when the turban has encircled his head, and the scimitar dangled before him, with lips compressed and steadfast eye mimic the tremendous sternness of an Ottoman tyrant; then mayst thou conceive a lively idea of the haughty look with which I was received, when I approached the presence of Sir James Lordly. He surveyed me from head to foot at his leisure, and at last addressed me with, Well, and what's your name? I answered his question, and added in few words an account of my present situa-

situation, wishing that, on my cousin Praywell's account, he would interest himself to obtain me some employment, which I the more hoped, as she had assured me he was ever ready to do a benevolent action. So, replied he, and what are you fit for? I mentioned my having had a tolerable education, and that I should have no objection to the closest application, if that was necessary in any place he might procure me. Well, as you are Praywell's relation, said he, I shall think of it, tho' for yourself, I see nothing promising in you. I suppose you are honest, or at least will boast of being so. I told him, that I had no other testimony than my own assertion, respecting my honesty, but I was sure he would never on that score have the least cause to repent

D

having

having recommended me. You may come hither then, said he, to-morrow, and I shall in the mean time procure you a clerkship in one of the public offices, or some other place more advantageous. I thanked him, and took my leave, and flew to acquaint Mrs. Praywell with my success, and after hearing a few pious ejaculations from her, I sought my old friend the preacher to carry him also the good tidings. Now, brother, cried he, when I had told him, the Lord has wrought a good work; but as I have been an unworthy instrument in his hand to perform it, I trust your generosity will not let me go unrewarded. From what I had already learnt of his character, I had no reason to think he was disinterested in what he had done, and assuring him he should always find

me

me grateful for the favours I received from him, I desired him for the present to accept a little gift of me, in earnest of what he might expect; and pulling out of my pocket a guinea and a half, being all I was worth, I gave him the guinea, which he accepted without the least sign of reluctance.

I then went home, overjoyed at my success, impatiently wishing for the next day; and so much were my thoughts employed, that I laid awake the greatest part of that night, forming schemes for my future conduct, and pleasing myself with the hopes of marrying Clara, when industry should have improved the little fortune I was soon to be possessed of, and made it sufficient to furnish us with the necessaries of life, as I had no doubt of her willing-

ly resigning her present more affluent condition, to partake with me of one more confined, and to steal, as it were, through life unnoticed and unknown, in the quiet possession of content.

I was wholly taken up with these thoughts, when my chamber door softly opened, and I discerned something white, of the stature of a man, enter the room, and advance slowly towards my bed. I was not so much frightened as to call out, but I lay trembling. The seeming spectre soon approached the feet of the bed, and pointing to its right arm with its finger, uttered the words *Help me*, in a very mournful tone. By this time I had recalled resolution enough to ask who it was, but to this I received no answer. I could not bear to remain longer in uncertainty, and,

and, leaping up, caught hold of its arm, and found it was a man in his shirt, which was bloody. He was unable to stand longer, and I with some difficulty helped him on the bed, and ran out immediately to call for assistance. The master of the house, and some other people obeyed the summons, and when we had gotten a light, and examined the poor wretch, who was by this time almost senseless, it proved to be a waiter who had been let blood in the afternoon, and his arm having bled afresh in the night, he had lost so much blood, that it was with difficulty he walked to my room, which was near his town. A surgeon was immediately sent for, and care taken of the man, but as the maid-servant could not be found, a person ran up stairs to

call her, and was surprized, on entering her room, to hear her call out for mercy; but she being soon convinced who was with her, and asked the cause of her fright, she confessed, that as she was returning from a lodger's bed to her own, she had met the apparition on the stairs, and had expected nothing less every minute than its following her, and believed it was now come to punish her for her sins. The girl's adventure was subject for laughter some time, and as I had no inclination to sleep, I walked out, now it began to be day-light, to compose myself.

After I had breakfasted, I repaired to Sir James Lordly's again. I was admitted to him, and he accosted me in a milder tone than before, with news of his

his success in my affair. I would, said he, have sought you a different employment from that which I have obtained, but this fell accidentally in my way, and I think you will prefer it. You are a scholar, continued he, and must act in that capacity. A certain friend of mine has suffered greatly in his character by a pamphlet lately published, which detects some egregious mistakes and oversights in his management of a public transaction. The pamphlet-writer calls them wilful errors, which I hardly think them to be, altho' the facts, I believe, are real. Now, in order to counteract the mischief of this book, you are to write another, for which my friend will provide you materials, which must justify him, and calumniate another gentleman,

tleman, who is his rival in office. Your reward will not be trifling for this piece of service, and you shall be well provided for afterward.

I listened to what he said not without uneasiness, and now assured him that I should be very unwilling to blacken the character of a man whom I should probably think well of, and that I should have no less objection to defending him who had injured his country, and that, as it seemed, designedly, especially as he could stoop to such meanness as to revenge himself on his guiltless neighbour, because he was himself justly accused. Anger sparkled in the eyes of Sir James, while I was speaking. How! cried he, have you objections to what I propose? Truly, I told him, I had so strong ob-
jections

jections to it, that were the business as dark as I apprehended, and as he seemed to confess, I would not undertake it, tho' there were no other alternative than starving, or begging my bread. Be assured, then, said he, you shall not be employed in this business; but I cannot think of your impudence without amazement. You are poor, and yet refuse to do what your conscience does not wholly approve, even when you would be so amply rewarded for it, nay, even at my request! What, think you, are you and every other needy wretch made for? Is it not to be subservient to the pleasures of the rich? Is it not to toil day and night to procure our ease and gratification? Is it not to suppress every scruple of conscience, and to banish your ideas of right and wrong,

when our concerns require it, or when our will commands it? And you have the consummate assurance to dispute our right of command over you! Begone this moment from my sight, lest I order you to be thrown from the window. Begone, repeated he, without making reply.

My fair prospect of advancement was now vanished, yet I could not tax myself with any blame; nevertheless, I returned to my lodging greatly mortified, and having but little money, resolved to quit this, and seek a cheaper, and when I had paid my expences, I found myself with less than three shillings left. Heartily did I regret having given a guinea to the methodist parson, but that being irrecoverable, I endeavoured to forget it; and

the

the late repulse I had met with so much damped my spirits, that I hardly hoped for better success, and had little courage to make any more applications; yet as I had no means of support, after having considered every expedient, which occurred to my mind, I found none so likely to afford me those means, as to enter my name at a register office, and get a place as a footman, which I thought might soon be had, and the straitened condition of my affairs required dispatch.

When I had sought out an office, I represented my case in so pressing a manner to the keeper of it, that he promised me, if I would pay him two shillings, instead of one, I should not wait till my proper turn came to be served, for he had two or three entered before me in the same

capacity, but should certainly have the offer of the first place which he should know of. I accordingly paid it him, tho' I had reason afterwards to believe that this was what he practised with others, in order to get more money from them. I waited on him the next day, and as I had not money sufficient to pay the fee for searching his books, he was kind enough to accept of what I had, and finding, as he said, no place which could possibly suit me, he advised me to call on him the next day, when he had hopes of serving me. I attended him daily for almost a fortnight, till I had half stript myself of cloaths to defray the expence, and that of lodging and board at a little alehouse, which I was now glad to shelter in.

I was returning from him one morning
greatly

CHARLES CHANCE. 67

greatly dejected, when a huge strapping
lads tapp'd me on the shoulder, and asked
me if I had been seeking a place, as she
saw I was coming from the register office.
I answered in the affirmative, and was
again asked where I last served. I re-
plied, that being lately come to town, I
had not been employed since I arrived.
And can you, said she, keep a secret?
If it was not of a criminal kind, nor
dangerous to myself, I told her, I could
be as silent as she could wish. To-mor-
row then, answered she, meet me at this
place, and at this hour, till when, fare-
well.

The reader will easily imagine I was
anxious to know what this would end in.
My curiosity, however, remained unsatisfied
till the next day, when, at the appointed
place,

place, the same person met me, and telling me she was glad to find me so punctual, as it was some proof of my diligence, she ventured to explain the affair I was to assist in, for my care and secrecy in which, she assured me, I should not fail of reward.

Her mistress, she said, a young lady of fortune, to avoid a disagreeable marriage which her father would force her into, had resolved to elope to the house of an acquaintance about sixty miles distant, in order to prevent the consummation of her nuptials, and remain concealed till her father could be prevailed on to alter his determination; but as the old gentleman feared some such attempt, he had taken care to keep her so confined, that she had no possibility of escaping except from her chamber

chamber window into the garden, and which she intended to attempt that evening; and for privacy sake, chusing to go away on horseback, it depended on me to provide horses, and to receive the mistress and maid at the bottom of the garden, from whence we might proceed directly for the country. I think, continued she, that I run no hazard by engaging you in this business; I had promised that my brother should carry my mistress, but he having refused the employment, I was afraid to propose it to any other acquaintance; and as she ought not to venture herself with me alone, I have dared to engage you to accompany us. I told her I was willing to accept of the employment, and she immediately conducted me to the place I was to wait at,

at, till Miss W. (her mistress) should find means to come to me; and giving me money to provide necessaries, advised my having horses as near at hand as I could, to prevent any accident before we could make our escape. I assured her of my care to execute what she desired, and took my leave of her.

After hiring a couple of horses, I prepared myself for my journey, and all the evening attended at the place appointed. About ten o'clock, soon after the moon was risen, Miss W. and her attendant appeared, and with all possible haste we mounted, and departed for the country, Miss W. riding behind me.

She was tall, genteel, and very handsome; and the melancholy, which at present possessed her, added to the natural

softness

softness of her temper, rendered her conversation more than ordinarily engaging. I presently perceived that she looked on me as an acquaintance of her waiting-woman's, in which I did not, undeceive her, and had the better opinion of her prudence for not having knowingly trusted herself with a stranger.

Miss W. had set out by night, in hopes of not being missed before morning, when there would be less probability of being overtaken; and as our journey was lonely, she was glad, she told her attendant, of having taken her advice in having a man with them, as she should have been greatly afraid to have found herself with her woman only, where we now were. Yes, yes, replied the waiting-woman, I am well enough convinced that innocence is no
guard

guard against danger in such a case as ours, in spite of what Horace says. I was surprized to hear her mention Horace, and could not help telling her so. How! cried she, think you it strange for a Scotch lass to understand Latin? Indeed, I said, it was what I had not expected, any more than she probably had thought of my understanding it, but that I thought her remark was ill-natured on Horace's

Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus, &c.

which I supposed she hinted at, as that ode was evidently written in his natural gaité de cœur, when he had no thoughts of tying himself down to plain truth, and the prettiness of thought, and easy turn of the verse, were sufficient to atone for the want of this. So then, said she, in his
gaité

galeté de cœur, he made assertions, and produced justifying reasons. What think you of his

Namque me sylvæ lupus in Sabina,
Dum meam canto Lalagen, et ultra
Terminum curis vagor expeditus

Fugit inermem ;

is it not an excellent reason ? I was going to reply, when Miss W. interrupted me by enquiring how far I thought we had travelled. She was tired, she said, and intended, as soon as it was day-light, to shelter in some cottage, where we might remain undiscovered till the return of night, when she would proceed directly to her friend's house, from whence I should be at liberty to return ; we hastened, therefore, all we could till morning, staying

staying only to refresh our horses at an inn, where a servant was sitting up for the coming of a stage-coach.

Soon after day-break we began to look out for a convenient asylum, and at a very considerable distance from the road, espied a small house which seemed suitable to our purpose. We immediately rode up to it, and found, to our great satisfaction, that it was inhabited by a woman and a girl, her daughter, about eighteen or nineteen years of age. Here we alighted, and asked permission to stay all day, which was readily granted, the good woman welcoming us very politely, and assuring Miss W. who she perceived was uneasy, that were it any other way in her power to render her service, more than by affording her refuge in her house, she would gladly

gladly do it, as she had herself known better days, and having been unfortunate herself, knew the better to pity and assist others who laboured under adversity. The good matron here wiped tears from her eyes, and Miss W. thanked her for her very kind offers, but suppressed the desire she had to be acquainted with the particulars of her misfortunes, as she imagined it might be disagreeable to her to repeat them.

Our horses were taken care of at a neighbouring farmer's house, whither Charlotte, our hostess's daughter, conducted me with them. This girl had been educated in the same humble station she was now in, the mother having retired to this village on the death of her husband, which happened soon after her

daughter's

daughter's birth. She had married beneath herself, and contrary to the will of her parents, who had therefore neglected her; and when she became a widow, not being favoured by them, nor acknowledged by her acquaintance, she had retired hither to maintain her daughter and herself by her industry, and to pass the remainder of her days in poverty and peace. We learnt thus much from her discourse; and Miss W. having contracted an esteem for her, made no scruple of trusting her with the secret of her own elopement.

The time passed away in various discourse, till unluckily we were visited by a very unwelcome guest. This was a gentleman of fortune in the neighbourhood, who riding past accidentally, and seeing

strangers

strangers in the house, especially women, saucily took the freedom of coming in, which he knew could scarcely be denied him; and taking a liking, as he said, to that pretty girl in the riding habit, meaning Miss W. swore a great oath that he would not leave her so soon, and ordered his servant to lead home his horse. The young lady desired very earnestly that he would not stay on her account, as he was a stranger to her, and as she had very particular reasons for remaining alone. To this our gentleman replied, that he loved a fine girl from his soul, and was satisfied that none of them disliked a brisk young fellow's company, however coy they might seem; but, damn him, he knew how to please the poor things, by interpreting their words by contraries.

contraries. He then put his arm round her waist, and attempted to kiss her, but found himself rudely repulsed. This he interpreted according to his usual method, and expressed his thoughts of it in words which approached too near to indecency, to admit of being heard calmly either by Miss W. or even by the mistress of the house, who sharply reprimanded him, and peremptorily bid him be gone. His wealth, she said, could not authorize him to behave as he did, and she was determined he should not, under her roof, affront those who by the laws of hospitality were entitled to her protection. He affected to smile at her, and continued his insolent familiarity towards Miss W. both in his words and actions, till I at last thought myself authorized to resent the affront offered

offered her. I did this in words which plainly convinced him I paid no deference to his rank, and which procured me the favour of being damn'd for a saucy puppy and a rascal, and threatened with the discipline of his whip. Poverty, as it had not rendered me insolent, so neither had it taught me to pass by cowardly the abuses of haughtiness; I dared him therefore to the execution of what he had threatened, when he started up, reddening with anger, and struck me with the whip; he was going to repeat his stroke, when I seized him by the collar, and with a sudden snatch pulled him to the door, and giving him two or three blows, got him out. We then attacked each other fiercely, and for some time on nearly equal terms; but victory at last declared

E

in

in my favour, and I insisted on his asking Miss W. pardon, but this he refused in a scornful manner, and I thought best to let him depart, which he did, not without bestowing a volley of curses on me, and threatening revenge. I endeavoured to mortify him by insulting him in his turn, as long as he was within hearing; after which I enquired of our hostess what revenge she thought he would seek. To this she replied, that as he was a powerful man in the neighbourhood, she feared it might be in his power to hurt me, if I staid longer, and advised me to get out of his reach. Miss W. thinking it prudent to follow this advice, I immediately fetched our horses; and, after she had made Charlotte a very handsome present, which she believed the mother would hardly

hardly have accepted, whom she also took leave of with thanks, we set forward on our journey, and, without meeting with any accident worth mentioning, we arrived in the evening at the end of our journey, and I delivered my fair charge safe to her friends, a great deal fatigued with the continual apprehension she had been in of being pursued during the latter half of our journey.

CHAP. V.

Concerning the contents of which nothing is premised, as the reader may be better acquainted with them by the perusal of the whole chapter.

MISS W. was welcomed by her friend, and having therefore no farther occasion for my service, paid me well for my trouble, thanked me for the care I had taken of her, and, wishing me success in the world, dismissed me. I had still charge of the horses, and set off at an easy rate with them towards London.

I had proceeded about a dozen miles, when at an ale-house where I stopt,
I fell

CHARLES CHANCE. 77

I fell into conversation with a young fellow, who was travelling the same road with myself, and who, finding I had a spare horse, asked what he should give me to let him ride half a score miles, for that he had no other horse than that in his hand, shewing me a stout cudgel which he walked with. He was not very well dressed, and, guessing he was not overcharged with money, I offered to let him ride gratis, for which he was very thankful, and I was glad I had an opportunity to gratify him.

We rode about a mile together, when, being in the middle of a lane, my companion, without my having the least suspicion, struck me so violent a blow on my head with his cudgel, that I fell

from my horse, and the villain, jumping off, drew a pistol from his pocket, which he clapp'd to my breast, and swore he would murder me if I made any resistance, or refused to give him my money.

As I could not defend myself, I gave him all I had, and menacing me with death, if I dared to follow him, he rode off with both the horses, leaving me to curse my folly in having trusted myself with him.

I had received a bruise in my leg by the fall, and my hair I found clotted with blood, which flowed from a wound he had given me in my head; and therefore I halted back as well as I could to the ale-house we came from, and having represented my case to the landlord, begged he would let me have a lodging,

and

and asked if there was a surgeon to be got, who might dress the wound I had received. Why I can't say, replied he, but the thing may have happened as you tell me, and that same blood upon your head makes me think so; but I don't believe Mr. Caustic will trouble himself with you, unless you had wherewith to pay him; and as to lying here, I have not a bed in the house to spare; besides, if you should be worse, there will be no getting rid of you, so that I would advise you to go to your own home. Here are several hours before night, and 'tis fine weather for walking, the roads too are wonderfully good. I walked yesterday four or five miles, and never in my life had pleasanter travelling. I as-

fured him it was absolutely impossible for
 me to reach the town I set out from, and
 hoped for charity's sake he would not
 deny me leave to stay in his house, at
 least till the next day, as perhaps I might
 then be more able to walk. Charity's
 sake! said he; I might prate of charity
 long enough without getting any thing
 by it, and I shall hardly be so much a
 fool to put myself to expence for charity's
 sake. If the Brewer would give me his
 beer for charity's sake, or the landlord
 forgive me his rent, or the King his
 taxes, or even the Parson abate of his
 tithes, there might be some reason to en-
 tertain you for charity's sake; but every
 one looks to himself, and I must do so
 too; so you must make a shift to get
 home

home to-night; walking will do your leg service, and if you tie a handkerchief round your head, it will hinder the cold from doing you harm. I was heavily chagrin'd at his want of feeling, and, resolving to suffer to the utmost rather than solicit him longer, was endeavouring to crawl away, if his wife, who was more compassionate than himself, seeing I walked with great difficulty, and that the blood still trickled from my head, had not given me leave to lie in the stable, promising she would send the maid with something to dress my wound. I very willingly accepted this offer, in hopes that I might be able soon to continue my journey to London on foot, unless I should be able to get any em-

ployment where I was, which I resolved to do if possible, as I had no better prospect of success elsewhere.

I repaired to the stable, and the maid soon after followed me with some dressings which her mistress recommended; and having applied them according to the best of her abilities, left me to the enjoyment of pain and melancholy by myself.

When night approached I laid myself on some straw, and through weariness fell asleep. I did not, I believe, sleep very sound, being wakened about midnight by the noise of somebody striking a light. I listened without speaking, and presently heard two men who were come with an intention to set fire to

to the stable, in order, as I learnt from their discourse, to be revenged on the landlord, who had done them some injury; and one of them proposed to his partner to rob the house, which they might safely do, he said, while the people were in a fright, and endeavouring to extinguish the fire. I was so much terrified at their villainous attempt, and my own danger, that I would have been content with another such misfortune as that of the preceding day, to be fairly quit of the danger I was now in, having little doubt, should they perceive me, of my being sacrificed to their safety; I laid still, however, and scarcely dared to breathe, for fear of being discovered. The villains present-

ly set fire to some straw, and went away to watch an opportunity of robbing the house, whilst I remained in doubt what to do, thinking it almost as dangerous to go out, as to stay, but the dread of being burned alive compelled me to venture out, and I had the good fortune to do it unperceived, but had not courage to call the family, as I was sure the incendiaries were within hearing.

Mean time the fire spread itself apace, and the roof, which was thatched, was soon in flames. The people of the house, who had perceived the light, now hurried out with consternation in their looks, and gazing at each other, would have suffered the fire to rage without resistance,
even

even tho' their dwelling seemed in imminent danger, had not I reminded them to use their utmost efforts to withstand it, and told them of the design to rob them. Such terror had seized the master and mistress, that they wrung their hands, and vented a thousand useless exclamations, whilst the servants, and some neighbours, hindered the fire from reaching the dwelling, but the stable and out-houses were entirely destroyed.

As the fire decreased, every one's fears subsided, and the question was now agitated, How could the fire happen? To satisfy them in this, I had related what I had overheard, and bid them search whether ought was stolen. My story was heard attentively, and conjectures formed
from

from it, the result of which was, that in consequence of my having been denied a lodging, &c. I had set the stable on fire in revenge, and invented my story to screen myself; and the misjudging wretches were confirmed in their opinion from the corroborating circumstance of there having been nothing stolen from the house, paying no regard to what I urged, that the villains probably found no opportunity of getting in undiscovered, every thing I could say being drowned in the clamour raised against me; and I was in consequence immediately hurried away on horseback to a neighbouring town, to be carried before a justice the next morning.

This

This was a stroke I had not expected, and an ignominy which I knew not how to brook, however low misfortune had already brought me.

As soon as Justice Mittimus was risen, I was conducted into his hall, where I found him seated in an elbow chair, with Mrs. Mittimus on his right hand, and his clerk on his left. The constable, and those who were witnesses to what I had said, ranged themselves in a semicircle before the judgment-seat, and I was placed in the center. In another situation I should probably have been greatly diverted at such a scene, as the justice assumed a ridiculous air of authority, and the trembling peasants presented as odd a group of faces as can be supposed.

The

The charge being laid against me, the justice addressed me with, And what, ye rogue, can ye zay vor yourzelve? In answer to his question, I said what I could for myself, by relating the whole affair, on which he remarked, That it was very dark on my zide, and he was avear'd I zould be hang'd vor it. Ay, ay, cried Mrs. Mitimus, if I was his worship, I'd hang you up before my door immediately, you shabby rascal you. Peaze, wive, said the justice, and don't interrupt the court. And zo, continued he, addressing himself to me, thiz iz all ye 'ave to zay? Well; well, ye zall 'ave another lodging to-night, vor I zall commit ye to Bridewell, unlez ye can vind bail. I told him I hoped he would not be so severe as to

com-

commit me to Bridewell on so slight a suspicion, and that I could not get bail, being absolutely a stranger in that part of the country. Oh, oh, I thought, you rogue, what it would come to, said Mrs. Mittimus, why, how came you in the town at all? Wive, wive, said the justice, 'tis my bizinez to ax quezions; ay, ow came ye ither at all? As the business I came upon was of so particular a kind, I told him I had been to attend a relation into the country, and was returning with the horses we had travelled on. Why then zend to your relazion vor bail, said he. But this I declined doing; and Mrs. Mittimns cried out, She thought what an errand I came on, and made no doubt I had stolen the horses. In short, I was on
the

the point of being sent to prison, when news was brought that the villains who had caused the fire were discovered, having been overheard quarrelling, and reproaching each other with cowardice for not having robbed the house. In consequence of which I was cleared of suspicion, and the real incendiaries were brought, and committed to prison in my stead.

Whilst this was doing, our ears were suddenly saluted with a stanza of the *Early Horn* sung in a most vociferous strain, and followed with a loud holla to the hounds, and a smart smack of a whip. The person to whom we were indebted for this piece of entertainment now entered the hall, whistling as he came, which he interrupted

rupted with, What the devil's here to do now? I looked earnestly at this blade, who was drest in a green frock edged with gold lace, and had a velvet cap and boots on, and I was informed in a whisper, that he was the justice's only son, and the best fox-hunter in the country. He took notice of my observing him, and seeing my head was tied round with a handkerchief, asked me whether or not I had been drubbed lately; if I had, it was not fairly done. I replied, and related the manner in which I had been knocked down. That was a damned unfair trick indeed, he said, in which a man had no chance. But a little, said I; yet if the rogue had not held a pistol to me, I believe I could have mastered him; at least I

would

would have endeavoured to do it. That's well said, cried he; I've a damned cowardly dog of a footman, who durst not fight a farmer that found fault with my riding over his hedges, but I shall turn him away next week, for since I threatened him, the rascal has been enquiring for another place. Unpromising as this place seemed, I thought it preferable to starving, and therefore offered my service, which was accepted, without any farther knowledge of my character, than that nature had kindly furnished me with a tolerable share of strength and courage.

I was not received into 'squire Mittimus's service till the next week, and in the mean time found credit for my board, on account of my being hired by him; and

and Mr. Caustic, who was surgeon to all the towns within half a score miles, was ordered to take care of me at my master's expence.

A considerable part of my employment now was to ride a-hunting with my master; and as his favour depended a great deal on my riding in the same desperate manner as himself, I have frequently been in danger of breaking my neck, by following him over every obstruction of hedge or gate which lay in his way. I by this means ingratiated myself with him, and studied his temper so well in other respects, that I had the good luck to stay in his service almost a twelvemonth, a part of which I was in a higher capacity than that of a footman.

There

There lived in our neighbourhood one Jenny Morton, a young girl, who if not beautiful, might justly be stiled pretty. Her father rented a small farm, and having no other child than her, he had given her some education, and afterward, taken her home to keep his house on the death of her mother. As she had an air of gentility superior to the neighbouring females, she soon became the object of their envy, and was the more so, because the neighbouring swains paid a greater deference to her than to the rest. Amongst those whose notice she had attracted, was our young 'squire, who was frequently heard to declare his approbation of handsome Jenny Morton, to which he generally added a wish, not over decent

in.

indeed, but which as well evinced his liking her, as if he had asserted it in terms more polite, and in a manner more solemn. It will easily be believed, that she was not a little vain of the distinction which she saw made between herself and her acquaintance; and as this was really the case, she had never listened to the offers of marriage which had been made her by several young men, who were her equals, if not her superiors, in point of fortune. Her father, indeed, never sought to cross her inclinations in this respect, especially as he had occasion for her service in the management of his house.

As I had so often been witness to my master's praising this girl, I wonder it did not earlier enter my thoughts, that he probably

bably might think it worth while to make love to her, but certain it is, I had not the least suspicion of it, till a mere accident brought me acquainted with it.

It was frequently my custom in the summer to walk after supper in a grove not far distant from the house; and one evening, after having been reading by moon-light, as I was returning through a shady walk, I was surprized at meeting Jenny Morton, who not being able to avoid my seeing her, came up to me, and asked if I had been walking to enjoy the pleasantness of the evening as well as she; adding, that she had been a little afraid at meeting me, till she saw certainly who it was. As she had never treated me with so much

affa-

affability hitherto, I was ready to attribute this to her fear of me in such a place, and at such a time. Encouraged therefore by her familiarity, I offered to accompany her in her walk, and be her safeguard home; but this she earnestly refused, and I as earnestly insisted on; and whilst we were debating, somebody entered the walk at a distance, whom Miss Morton perceiving, conjured me to be gone, for it was the 'squire who was coming. I now guessed the reason of her being here alone, and instantly departed, tho' not so far, but I was very near being discovered by my master, who soon after examined every passage to a considerable distance, to see whether or not I had concealed myself.

F

self.

self. The suspicion this gave me heightened my curiosity to stay in the grove, and I had very cogent reasons to believe they did not neglect the opportunity which the silence and loneliness of the grove afforded them; but the 'squire, when he came home, having enquired, and found out, that I was but just returned, had wit enough to suspect that I had staid in the grove, and knew perhaps more than he wished I should, and I had the satisfaction soon after of knowing this by his treatment of me, and by some slight hints from him on the subject. Miss Morton, too, probably, might be afraid for her reputation, and for that reason interest herself in my behalf with her lover, who addressed me one day as

fol-

follows. I wonder, Charles, that you, who are a clever fellow, should continue so long a footman; damn it, why don't you get upon a better scent? It became me, I replied, to be contented with my situation, especially whilst it was made so pleasant by his favours. Ay, ay, answered he, I am well enough to you, but that whore-son puppy, my father's clerk, does not please me in looking after the estates, and I've a great mind to ask my father to make you steward. You are scholar enough, I know, only mind this, — Mum's the word — You know Jenny Morton — that's all. I assured him he might depend on my care in any thing which he employed me about, but I should be unwilling to be accessory in in-

F 2

juring

juring the clerk of any part of his income. You need not be squeamish about that, said he, for his pay won't be lessened, the dog will only have less to do; but remember the conditions, run you a pufs down where you will, and say nothing about me. I promised obedience, and thanked him. He was as good as his word, and to my very great satisfaction I was appointed overseer of the justice's estates, and had a very tolerable income.

Fortune, which had hitherto seldom smiled on me, seemed now to have changed her mind, and I began again to think of the connections which I had with Clara, with pleasure.

I performed my duty with care and circumspection, and equally to the satisfaction

CHARLES CHANCE. 101

tisfaction of my master and his tenants, and these last seemed particularly fond of their new overseer, as they had not in truth been well treated by my predecessor.

CHAP. VI.

Which they who can stoop to any meanness, in order to thrive, may pass by without notice.

WHILST I remained in my present situation, I took care that the owner of the horses I had lost, should be reimbursed their value, as it would have been unjust not to have done it, now

I was able, altho' the loss must fall to my share.

As I was in favour with the 'squire, I had more than once the satisfaction of doing the servants good offices with his father by his means, and was almost always applied to for that purpose, as I never shewed an unwillingness to serve them.

One morning the chaplain (with whom I had contracted an intimacy) came into my chamber before I was up, and begged my assistance to get him reinstated, the justice having given him notice the preceding night to leave the house. This was done, he told me, at the instigation of the rector of the parish, who was desirous of having another person
made

made chaplain in his stead. The principal fault, he said, which had been laid to his charge was, that he had been seen reading Virgil on a Sunday after sermon, when he was walking in the fields, and that this had been represented to the justice in such a light, that he declared against retaining any one in his house, who should read such heathenish and ungodly books on Sundays, and much less would he suffer his chaplain to do so. I was sorry for my friend's misfortune, which however I was so lucky to remedy, having, with a deal of intreaty, procured his pardon, on his promising to be more circumspect in future. When I carried him the good news, he was overjoyed beyond measure, and greatly beyond

what his good fortune merited, for his allowance was only a guinea *per* month, and his board, but he was of a meek and contented disposition, and timorous, in regard to risking his fortune in the world, to an extraordinary degree. He was, however, an excellent scholar, and a really honest man. I had a great esteem for him, and having never enquired into the story of his life, took the opportunity of his grateful offers of obliging me to request that satisfaction. There had happened nothing to him, he said, worth my attending to, but as he was desirous to oblige me, he would relate the most particular accidents in few words, which he did as follows.

My

My father (whom heaven was pleased to deprive me of very early) was a clergyman. I was his only son, and he made it his principal pleasure to take care of my education, and of that of my two sisters. Our future happiness, he knew, depended on it, and his own no less than ours. He designed me early for the church, and therefore took care that I was diligent in prosecuting my studies. My sisters he educated with a little more learning than was, perhaps, necessary for them, but he at the same time took especial care that they should not be initiated in the low notions of pride and self-sufficiency, nor in an expensive luxury of dress beyond what was suitable to their rank, to which I am sorry truth obliges

me to say, my mother was extremely prone; and he so well succeeded, that they might well have been esteemed as patterns to their sex; but alas, how susceptible is woman of vanity! How unable to resist the allurements of pleasure, if long habit has not confirmed her in the principles of virtue! My father died when my sisters were, one only sixteen, and the other eighteen years old. You will spare me the relation of the gay scenes which my mother soon after launched into, the fatal effects of which were in time visible in my sisters, who became incorrigible coquets, and in the end the eldest went off with a raking lord, and the youngest was as much a prey to indiscretion at home.

My

My father did not die rich, and the fortune he left was soon dissipated in a manner which it gives me pain to think of. For my part, I was sent to college, and became very little expensive to my mother, as I acquired an income almost sufficient to defray my charge, by means of a couple of brother students, young gentlemen of fortune, who having much stronger inclination to pleasure and enjoyment of life, as they falsely termed riot and excess, than they had to study, frequently stood in need of my assistance to atone for their neglect, and liberally paid me for my trouble.

When I left the university I took up orders, and not having interest to procure even a curacy, I was glad to preach

occasionally for any of the neighbouring clergy, and to accept of a gratuity for doing it. The rector of this parish, who has now endeavoured to hinder me of my livelihood, took me at last as his curate. I preached at four adjoining parishes every Sunday, and my pay was only two shillings and six pence per sermon, which my principal without fail deducted whenever he preached himself, which he often did through a principle of parsimony, though he is very unfit, having formerly exercised no less than three trades, and for want of ability failed in each; after which, so late in life as at the age of forty-five, by dint of friends he got into orders, and obtained these livings, and now, as
you

you very well know, keeps his coach. I left his curacy to accept the chaplainship I now enjoy, which he was very angry with me for doing, and often takes opportunities of blaming me. I'll give you one instance. A little while since I was overtaken by him in his coach as I was returning from the next town, where I had been to deliver a message in the absence of the footman; I accosted him as submissively as usual, and walked by the coach side answering some questions which he thought proper to ask me. A poor cripple sat by the road side, and pulling off his hat, seemed to ask charity in silence. I was moved with compassion for the poor wretch, and though I could ill afford it,

it, gave him sixpence; for which our uncharitable gentleman sharply reprimanded me, as being the encourager of idleness. When I urged that the beggar was a cripple, He ought then, replied he, to be left to the care of his parish; though for his part, he was sorry that we could not some way or other be rid of those poor who were incapable of working, and wished the government would send them abroad with the transports every year, and give them as an equivalent one for the other, as we should wholly save the expence of their maintenance. In answer to what I said of the hardships which in such a case would fall to the share of the poor, he replied, that it was not material, as the
more

CHARLES CHANCE. III

more they suffered in this life, the less would they have to suffer in the next. After all, he took occasion to acquaint 'Squire Mittimus with my crime, who was generous enough to think I had not done amiss.

The chaplain ended his recital, and I could not, indeed, but pity his situation; but I have since heard his bad fortune had persecuted him further; for having married Jenny Morton on the 'squire's recommendation, and she having brought him a son in two months after, the poor man gave way to melancholy, and being since burthened with six children, is reduced to extreme poverty, and his low-spiritedness is increased to such a degree, that he is utterly
unable

unable to perform the duties of his office, and grown the object of universal pity.

But to return to my own affairs. I considered that Clara by this time being of age, had the disposal of her person at least, if not of her fortune, and as I had a fair prospect of being able to preserve her and myself from real want, which would be sufficient to make us both contented, I determined to ask her father's consent to our union, and should I be refused, to request her own without it, and to remain unambitiously in the quiet station I at present enjoyed. I had fixed the day for my setting out to visit her, when accidentally having business at a neighbouring

bouring market town, I met an old acquaintance there with whom I had been intimate during my stay with Velum, and who had now changed his abode.

After mutual congratulations on seeing each other well, I enquired concerning Clara, and received intelligence that she had been married about half a year to one Mr. Bartlett, who I very well knew had paid his addresses to her with her parents consent, at the same time that I had engaged her affections. Words cannot express the surprize I was in at hearing this news, and when I seemed to doubt it, my friend informed me that he had been in the house which Mr. Bartlett had fitted up, and that he

he saw him and Clara go to church to be married that very morning in which he left the town. I parted from my friend with as much composure as I could assume, but vented my uneasiness as soon as I was alone in execrations against my fortune, myself, women, and almost every thing, except Clara in particular, which in spite of her perfidy, I could not think of doing. I had no hopes that time would diminish my anxiety, neither found I that it had at all that effect; on the contrary, the lonely and romantic places which I chose for my walks, increased the grief which preyed on my spirits, and my looks indicated a decay of health, which compelled me to consider of means to shun the

the

the impending evils. I determined at last to try if a variety of livelier objects might not be serviceable to dispel my melancholy, and accordingly resigned the stewardship I possessed, and taking leave of my employer, and of my friend the chaplain, departed for London in the stage, with an intention to attend, if possible, some gentleman on his travels, having now attained a perfect knowledge of the French and Italian languages, which I had begun to study a little before I was turned away from Mr. Vellum's.

I arrived at the end of my journey in safety, and taking a private lodging for a month, walked out to visit an acquaintance or two whom I had known
when

when in town before. I was passing by Drury-lane playhouse, when I perceived by the bills that a new piece was to be performed that evening the first time. The crowd which I saw entering the house was so great, that it was not possible to get in without difficulty; curiosity, however, induced me to attempt it, and with only the loss of a handkerchief, which my pocket was pick'd of, I succeeded, and seated myself very much to my satisfaction. I was here informed before the representation began, that a strong party was formed to damn the play, and another equally strong to defend it, so that there would probably be what they termed excellent sport. I had never been witness to such a scene

scene before, and was surprized to find so great a part of the audience highly diverted at the continual noise and disturbance which totally hindered their forming any judgment of the performance, and should have been very well pleased, had I been able to get away. When the play was over, and I was coming out, my old friend the journeyman baker, whom I had left a methodist preacher, clapped me on the shoulder, and swearing a great oath, told me he was glad to see me. He had on a laced coat and waistcoat somewhat foil'd, with which the rest of his dress pretty well agreed, and he wore a sword. He was accompanied by four persons genteelly dressed, who called to him not
to

to stop, and he, asking if I would go with him, took me by the arm, and led me away without waiting for an answer. He seemed to be in good company, and as I knew him, I went with him without reluctance, and we presently entered a tavern, where they had ordered supper to be provided, which was ready, and we immediately sat down to it. I still remained in suspense as to the rank of my old acquaintance; two of the company I found were honoured with titles, a third I believed to be a gentleman also, but I shrewdly suspected the fourth and my companion to be little better than sharpers. I can scarcely tell what reason I had for my suspicion, more than that

that I was acquainted with the character of one, and that I observed them to understand each other very well, often giving each other very significant looks, and appearing more wary than their companions. The discourse first ran on the play we had been at, where our gentlemen had been tolerably vociferous on the damning side.

When supper was over, and the waiter had loaded his hands with dishes and plates, to carry them down stairs, one of the honourable gentlemen, by means of a small fish-hook and a string, fastened a squib to his sleeve, which was lighted at the same time, and to the no small entertainment of my companions, so surprized the poor fellow on its going off, that he

tumbled

tumbled to the bottom of the stairs with all his burden, and at the expence of a couple of teeth, which were beaten out in his fall. When they had laughed heartily at this exploit, my friend offered to divert them with an exhibition in the tabernacle manner, and to this end mounted a table, and whimsically harangued us in the methodistical strain a considerable time, after which he sung a hymn in a tone and manner so perfectly ridiculous, that it overcame all the gravity I could muster, and forced me to join the mirth of my companions.

It was next proposed to scour the streets in search of adventures, in which manner they usually closed their evenings, and after fixing the gaming-house they
were

were to meet at the next day, lest they should be dispersed in any rencounter, they sallied forth to what they called the enjoyment of life, which narrow-soul'd mortals, who have no taste, would have called doing mischief. I affected to join in this scheme very readily to prevent being laughed at, but secretly determined to drop my company the first opportunity, and ventured to whisper as much to my friend the preacher. Truly, said he, you will act prudently, and I have nearly the same intention, always making it a rule, to desert them if I see any danger; and often as I have engaged in these adventures, I never but once had the complaisance to accompany my friends to the round-house,

G

from

from whence, however, they generally find means to extricate themselves before the morning.

I had no time now to enquire about the change in my friend's circumstances, but was convinced he made no scruple to subsist by the follies and foibles of those whom he could make dupes to serve his purposes. I quickly found a fair opportunity to leave my companions, and returned to my lodgings, reflecting on the adventures of the evening.

In the course of my enquiries for such a place as I wanted, I had the mortification several times to be refused, as not being properly qualified, though I was very well recommended. I was thought too young to go as tutor to those young gentlemen,

gentlemen, who made the grand tour for improvement, and both with these, and with persons who travelled for amusement, to whom I offered myself as an interpreter, my not having traversed Europe in person was an insuperable obstacle, although the stipend proposed to be paid me was less than will easily be imagined.

I was at last sent for by a lady, who designing to render her son an accomplished gentleman, intended to send him abroad, but not till he was a perfect master of the polite languages, and had acquired the genteelest education that could possibly be had at home.

I waited on Lady Modely according to her orders, and was shewn into a par-

lour, where her ladyship and her son were playing at cards. As soon as she saw me, she bid me sit down till the game was out, during which time I could perceive the young gentleman was her pupil, and apparently not very apt, as her frequently frowning on him, and shaking her head denoted. When her ladyship was at leisure, she addressed herself to me. I suppose, said she, you are the person I sent for to be guide to my Jemmy in his travels. I have been informed you were seeking such an employment. I intend my son should visit France and Italy, to learn the politest manners, and to have a taste in fashions; but as he has not yet finished his studies at home, I shall not send him

him abroad these two or three months, and I would have you teach him the Italian language, and whatever else you may think necessary to prepare him for his tour. 'Tis an immense deal of trouble we mothers have in our children's educations, continued she, but as it is so much for their benefit, we must not grudge our pains. Why, it's almost four years since I first began to give my son a proper education to make him a fine gentleman. Why, Mr. What's-your-name, believe me, it has been my constant study and care ever since. Card-playing, as you have seen, I teach him myself; four hours of every day I set apart for this purpose, besides an hour which he passes in resolving questions

out of Hoyle; another hour is allotted him to practise with his music-master, one hour also to learn fencing, two hours to dancing, and one to drawing; and besides this, half an hour every morning is appropriated to his learning to read and write: he has learned occasionally to speak French of Brunette, my woman, and if you teach him Italian in the morning half an hour, which he can spare now, being able to read and write tolerably, I think he will soon be qualified to set out on his tour. As her ladyship spoke with great volubility, I expected with patience the conclusion of her harangue; and then coolly asked her if she thought half an hour a day, during two or three months, sufficient

sufficient for the young gentleman's learning a language, especially when he was engaged in so many other studies, and wished, that part of the time allowed for some of the others, particularly that of cards, might be set apart for this study, especially as I presumed it to be far the most useful and eligible of the two. How! said the lady, far the most eligible of the two! Surely, Mr. What's-your-name, if you had the least taste, you would not have said so. Despise cards! Why surely you have not well considered the great advantages of card-playing; of that excellent inimitable art! How could a fine gentleman or lady kill the time which hangs on their hands, but for that most agree-

able, and let me say, most rational amusement? Is not card-playing the life, the soul of all good company, the opiate to cares, the exerciser of the wit, and in short the sweetner of life? Do not I bestow four, nay five hours every day to instruct my own son in the mystery, and do you think it is not superior to every other?

Her ladyship was by this time out of breath, and I made use of this occasion to acknowledge my error, and beg her pardon, not caring to raise such an obstruction to my progress so early, and hoping hereafter to counteract her ladyship's influence on the mind of her son, as I was not at all satisfied with her method of education, tho', as I have since found, it is extremely fashionable. But how
was

was I surprized when she enquired how much time I thought he should daily devote to cards while abroad, that he might not diminish his skill in that useful science by neglect, and heard also that I must be his instructor therein! I told her, not without hesitation, that I had been so unhappy as never to have learnt to play. Not learnt to play, said she, and yet think of being tutor to my son! I never before heard of such Gothic ignorance and barbarity in one who pretended to gentility. Very well, Sir, I shall have no occasion for your service, I shall seek a politer tutor; and having rung the bell, here, cried she to the footman, who came in, shew the man out, I am sorry I have lost so much time with him, and turning from

me, I heard her say, with a disdainful toss of her head, Ignorant wretch! I went away chagrined at my disappointment, and thoroughly disgusted with modern polite education.

Whilst I was thus unsuccessful in my search, my stock of money visibly decreased, and my repeated ill fortune by no means contributed to my composure of mind, so that I began now to indulge my pensiveness, and not being able to succeed in London as I wished, I resolved to pursue another scheme, an unpromising one, indeed, but as I gave up the hope of being happy in any situation, I only desired to get further from home, in hopes I might be seldomer reminded of the crosses I had met with, or rather I

little

little cared what became of me, as the principal happiness I had ever hoped for was, by the perfidy of Clara, put out of my power.

There was at this time a vessel ready to sail for America, on board which were a great many persons of both sexes, who, for the sake of some advantages offered them in the British settlements, were willing to leave their native country, and to inhabit a distant one, and experience the rigour of climates which they had never known. With these I determined to share my fortune, and having agreed for my passage, and made the necessary provision for my voyage, I became more settled, and resigned to my fate, looking on the expedition I was going upon, as an

induction to some settled state of life beyond what I could expect to meet with at home.

In two days after I had resolved on this expedient, I was summoned on board, and the next day we fell down the river to Gravesend, from whence we soon proceeded on our voyage, in the beginning of which I amused myself, by walking about and viewing the vessel, having never been on shipboard before, and by getting acquainted with some of my fellow-passengers.

I was particularly pleased with the conversation of a middle aged man, who had left his country in a pet at the ill luck he had met with, having danced attendance for some years on great men, and
been

been deluded all the time with fair promises, even tho' he had condescended to be their tool in dirty affairs, which they had not dared to be seen in themselves, and therefore seemed to stand a fairer chance for obtaining their favours, than the honestest man in the world with all his merit. I was talking with this man when we were interrupted by the fainting of a young woman who was near us, and who, as soon as she recovered, walked off the deck, and immediately sent to desire she might speak with me. I could not conceive the reason for this message, but whatever might be my wonder at it, thou wilt easily believe, reader, that it was infinitely heightened, when, on following the messenger, I was conducted to the
pre-

presence of Clara, who, harassed by misery as she had been, was unable to support the emotions which her seeing me unexpectedly had occasioned, and had fallen in a swoon, but whom I did not then much observe.

I stood motionless a few moments, irresolute how to behave, till Clara, with her usual sweetness, asked me if misfortune had so much altered her, that I did not know her. Alarmed at this intimation, I caught her in my arms, and it was not till after some minutes, that we were able to interrupt our happiness, by enquiring into the circumstances of our meeting in such a place. Eager as I was to know the particulars of Clara's story, I was obliged, in compliance with her

re-

request, to inform her first of my adventures, but not till after she had assured me that I had been misinformed in the account I had heard of her marriage, altho' appearances had caused my friend to mistake, and to deceive me without design. When I had made an end of my relation, Clara obliged me with the recital of her adventures in the following words.

CHAP.

presence of Clara, who, harassed by misery as she had been, was unable to support the emotions which her seeing me unexpectedly had occasioned, and had fallen in a swoon, but whom I did not then much observe.

I stood motionless a few moments, irresolute how to behave, till Clara, with her usual sweetness, asked me if misfortune had so much altered her, that I did not know her. Alarmed at this intimation, I caught her in my arms, and it was not till after some minutes, that we were able to interrupt our happiness, by enquiring into the circumstances of our meeting in such a place. Eager as I was to know the particulars of Clara's story, I was obliged, in compliance with her

re-

request, to inform her first of my adventures, but not till after she had assured me that I had been misinformed in the account I had heard of her marriage, altho' appearances had caused my friend to mistake, and to deceive me without design. When I had made an end of my relation, Clara obliged me with the recital of her adventures in the following words.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Which is written, gentle reader, for thy entertainment; read it, therefore, and see if it answers the intention.

I Had scarcely perused the letter you sent me, when you departed for London, before my uncle Vellum brought me that which he had found of mine. He entered the room abruptly, and holding the paper before me, ask'd if I knew it, and without waiting for an answer, began to scold and revile me in an outrageous manner. Saucy, impudent slut, he said, was that language fit for his niece to make use of about him? Do I,
added

added he, deserve this character? Is it not very well known, that lawyer Vellum never did a mean thing, or said a foolish one? Am I not in great business, and in high repute? And for wit, cannot I shew four copies of verses in a magazine which I always esteemed excellent? And yet, you unmannerly baggage, to say that you think I am not overburthen'd with sense, and you with your fellow, your Charles Chance, a happier situation than being my servant! But I shall represent the case to your father, in a very proper light, I assure you, Miss; I shall take care you shall never see your lover again, or my name is not Vellum. Saying this he hastened out of the parlour, and shut the door as violently as he was able, leaving

leaving me in expectation of a more severe lecture from my father, who, you know, is, as well as my uncle, a little irascible; but this time he did not shew it in words, refusing either to speak to me, or see me; my uncle, indeed, was sent back to harangue me on the duty which I owed to my parents, and to order me expressly never more to think of having any further connections with that mean worthless fellow Chance, and truly, mean and worthless were not the only epithets which he unjustly abus'd you with; and besides, take notice, said he, that your father designs Mr. Bartlett shall shortly be your husband, think well of it therefore, and obey him; your father has authority over you, and the advice of

an uncle, and of such a man as me, ought to be of infinite weight in your esteem.

At the end of this ridiculous speech he left me, and assumed so self-sufficient an air on the occasion, that although vexed, I could not help smiling at his ignorance. I would not expose him thus, as our affinity is so great, were not you already so well acquainted with his character.

From this time my father never designed to speak to me, and declared he would not, unless I would marry Mr. Bartlett, to whom I had so peculiar an aversion, that if my heart had not been pre-engaged, I am very confident I could never have been induced to accept him for my husband; I offered to my father, I confess, never to marry you without
his

his consent, but I expected in return not to be obliged to marry contrary to my own inclinations, yet this was denied me ; and, after several months passed in this disagreeable manner, a day was fixed for my marriage with Mr. Bartlett, before which I could find no access to my father, and I was absolutely denied the liberty to speak to him that very morning, unless I would attend him and my mother in a coach to church. As I had not lately seen Mr. Bartlett, I hoped that at my earnest intreaty he might be prevailed on to desist from his pretensions, but as I had no other method of speaking to him, I suffered myself to be conveyed to church, where, finding intreaties useless, I positively refused to marry him, though I softened

softened the refusal by all the respectful behaviour in my power. My father, however, took my refusal so heinously, that, in spite of my mother's prayers and tears, he refused me entrance into his house, and with harsh words, which I will not repeat, charged me never to let him see me more, and taking my mother home with him, and Mr. Bartlett, who bade me farewell, with an ill-natured sneer, he left me, expecting probably that I should follow him and submit to his proposal. This was impossible for me to do, and as I too well knew my father's temper to expect he would receive me on other conditions, I took the resolution of going to London, to solicit the protection of my aunt, who had formerly married contrary to the consent

sent of her parents, and who I doubted not would gladly receive me, she being now a widow, and my grandfather having settled a genteel income on her. I took a place in the stage-coach the same morning, and arrived the next day in town, when I immediately waited on my aunt, who welcomed me with all the civility imaginable, enquiring the reason of my unexpected visit, which I did not then acquaint her with, she having company with her, but joined in their discourse with all the good-humour I was mistress of. As soon as I was left alone with my aunt, I mentioned the circumstances of my father's displeasure, and begged she would afford me an asylum, 'till I should see what turn my affairs would take, to
which

which she replied very coolly, that she highly disapproved of my obstinacy in refusing to oblige my father, and that she would turn her own daughter out of doors, if she only thought her capable of such undutiful behaviour, and in short assured me, I must not expect to stay in her house even that night, unless I promised to make my peace with my father by compliance. I urged all the reasons I could think of to persuade her to assist me, but without effect, and I was at last denied leave to stay a minute longer, so that I left her, and walked back to the Inn where the coach had set me down, wholly uncertain how to act under so alarming a situation. I had several relations in London, but the behaviour of my

my aunt, (whom I had thought most likely to aid me, in consideration of her own marriage) had discouraged me from making application to them, and being determined to undergo almost any hardship, rather than be the wife of a man I so much disliked, I began to consider how I might earn my living, thinking that a very happy alternative to the proposed marriage. My thoughts were thus employed when a gentleman sent his compliments, and begged the favour of speaking to me. I had no acquaintance who I thought could know of my being in town, but as I had no reason to fear, whoever it might be, I ordered he should be shewn into the room, and recollected, on seeing him, that he had been one of the

the

the company with which I had passed the afternoon at my aunt's. He prevented my enquiring his business, by informing me that he brought a message from her; that she had considered the affair between my father and me, and though she would not openly countenance my elopement, she yet had such regard for me, as to offer me a refuge at her country house, where she would visit me unknown to my relations; and he had the pleasure, he said, of being appointed my conductor thither. I thanked him for the trouble he took, and immediately accompanied him in a coach to a genteel house about four miles off, which he said, my aunt had very lately purchased. When the gentleman took his

H

leave,

leave, he asked permission to visit me next day, and that with so much earnestness that, as I had no good excuse to make, I was obliged to consent, which I was sorry for, as he had on our way thither shewn so much assiduity to oblige me, and so often let fall ambiguous expressions of kindness, that I almost feared a declaration of love at the next meeting, which you will easily believe I by no means desired. After promising to assure my aunt of my respectful acknowledgments, he departed, and the next day I had his company several hours, when I had in truth the vexation to be teased with his declarations of love, which he concluded with a plain offer of taking me into keeping, and as he knew so much of my
affairs,

affairs, he looked on this offer, he said, if not what I merited, at least a more advantageous one than I could expect to meet with. As I rejected his proposals with unspeakable disdain, he again insisted on the advantage of them, to enforce which he told me, that the house I was then in belonged to him, that having gotten acquainted with my situation, he had invented his story of my aunt's kindness, in order to bring me thither, and that as I was now in his power, nor knew of a refuge if I were not, he thought I ought to applaud his generosity, and thankfully accept his offer. I was uneasy at having been duped in such a manner, and angry with myself for my want of precaution; nevertheless I insisted in such

a resolute manner on being suffered to depart, that, in an angry tone he ordered a coach, which I got into, telling the coachman to drive towards London, as I should acquaint him when I chose to be set down. It was evening when we arrived in town, and I had ordered I should be carried to the inn I had first been at, but was set down at another, which I did not perceive 'till I was in, and the coach gone. I was hurried into an upper room, where I had not been two minutes, ere the villain, whose house I had just come from, entered it, and with the gayest air imaginable, congratulated me on my arrival, although he did not expect, he said, to have found a lady of such nice principles as myself in a house of ill fame,

fame, and he must, therefore attribute my coyness hitherto to a particular dislike to his person, which he hoped a little further acquaintance would eradicate. I was so much surprized and shocked at his villainy, which I now easily perceived, that I remained some time incapable of speaking to him. Mean time he called for some wine, and locked the door, as soon it was brought. It was in vain for me to think of getting from him by force, and intreaties were to no effect. He hoped, I believe, to overcome my senses with wine, which he insisted I should drink of, but this I resolutely refused; in short, he began to take indecent liberties with me, and I don't know how far his brutality might have led him to

H 3 proceed,

proceed, although I fell on my knees, and implored his pity with tears, had not a most lucky accident prevented him. I was in the situation I have mentioned, when an extraordinary noise in the house took up his attention; he had scarcely listened a minute, ere somebody endeavoured to open the door, on which I called out for help, and the door being locked, it was instantly broke open by the officers of justice, who had that evening orders to search this house, on account of the frequent disturbances which happened there, and who came very opportunely to my rescue. My persecutor fled out at another door, which he unbolted, and I was conducted safely to a more reputable house by the officers, who, out of
their

their abundant good nature, declared to their superiors, that they had found nothing amiss or blameable, although they had in truth been witness to several scenes, acted in violation of decency.

I was by this time convinced of the necessity of my having some refuge from danger, and in consequence applied to an acquaintance of mine, one Mrs. Harbrow, who received me very cordially, and begged I would stay with her, 'till my father should be reconciled to me, or my fortune take some other turn, as she should be glad of such a companion, having no children beside a son, who resided in Jamaica. That I might be as little burthensome as possible to my friend, I assisted Mr. Harbrow, who was a linen-

draper, in his business, and kept his books, and had the pleasure to find that both my friend and her husband were extremely well satisfied with their guest. During my stay with these good people, I made intercession to my father frequently by letter, to be received home again, but without effect, and I was not indeed disappointed in this, but I believed I ought to make trial, and I hope I can satisfy my conscience in not having acted undutifully, as what I have done is in opposition to an assumed authority of my father, to which he has no just right, and the concession I made by promising never to marry without his approbation ought to have prevented his insisting on my marrying against my own.

A little

A little while after I was settled in this peaceful situation, I lost my good friend Mr. Harbrow, who died of a fever after a few days illness. Mrs. Harbrow was inconsolable for the loss of him, and survived him only a few weeks, leaving by will her personal estate, which was not inconsiderable, to be equally divided betwixt me and her son, who was extremely rich.

Young Mr. Harbrow, soon after his mother's death, arrived in England, with design to visit her, not having heard of the melancholy event. He appeared very uneasy at his disappointment, and not a little displeased at my being heiress to such a portion of his fortune; I perceived this, and not being troubled with

the vice of avarice, made him an offer of resigning my share into his hands, as I had no other claim to it, than that which his mother's esteem for me had induced her to put in my power. Why, in justice, he replied, I certainly had no natural claim, and if I was generous enough not to take the advantage of him, which I might do, it would be a proof of the nobleness of my sentiments, which would endear me to the honest part of the world, and which he would not be ungrateful for. In answer to this, I repeated my willingness to satisfy him, and a lawyer being immediately sent for, I gave Mr. Harbrow an acquittance in form of any demand on the estate of his late parents.

He

He acknowledged himself highly obliged to me for this piece of generosity; and as ingratitude, he said, was not amongst his vices, he begged, as a proof of his acknowledgment, that I would accept the present of my board 'till the affairs were settled, as he should be glad to have somebody remain in the house. I could not help smiling at such a proof of his gratitude, which, however, I had the grace to refuse, and Mr. Harbrow did not think fit to persuade me. You will not, I believe, think me over scrupulous in not keeping my share of my friend's estate, as it would scarcely have been just to detain it against Mr. Harbrow's will.

The day after I parted with Mr. Harbrow, I was to have visited a friend of his late mother's, a few miles from town, but was taken ill early in the morning, which disappointed me. My disorder was feverish, and as it increased, the woman of the house where I had taken a lodging advised me to send for a doctor; I did so, and as my illness lasted six weeks, during part of which I was delirious, my nurse found means to purloin a great part of my clothes, and to make my expences so exorbitant, that I was entirely stripped of money before I recovered. About the time when I began to get better, my uncle Vellum, having occasion to come up to town, found me out, and by order of my father, forbade me troubling him
with

with any more of my impertinent letters. He found I was distressed, and had the baseness to insult me for it, for which may heaven forgive him as much as I do.

As my hostess found that I was without money when I got well, she was extremely earnest to be paid, and the apothecary having also presented me with a bill of an enormous length, which he insisted on payment of in a few days, I was reduced to a terrible dilemma, not having clothes enough left, should I think of selling them, to defray their expences, and being intimidated with threats of imprisonment. I was revolving these melancholy reflections in my mind, and unable to contrive means to extricate myself,

when

when my hostess, who was anxious to save herself from loss, entered my room, and, with an air of triumph, assured me she could put me in a way to pay my debts, if I would agree to it, and if I would not, she positively refused to stay for her money another day, and I must, therefore, expect the consequences. I was alarmed at her doubting my agreement to her proposal, and expected to hear some infamous one, but I was disappointed when she explained her meaning. You are a stranger here, said she, and you have told me, that you have no motive to induce your living here rather than any where else. I can now introduce you to a gentleman, who is commissioned to engage young people to go to the plantations in America; and if
you

you are willing to go thither, you shall be well treated, and the money you owe here shall be paid. I asked a little while to consider of this proposal, and after weighing every circumstance, I came to a resolution to accept it. By this method I freed myself from present danger, and satisfied my conscience, by paying every one's demands on me, and as to what futurity might produce in this hazardous undertaking, I satisfied myself to the best of my power, being an outcast from my father's house, and in a manner an orphan, and therefore I looked on the evils of life as becoming more properly my portion. Since that time I have been on board this vessel, where nothing extraordinary has occurred, till I accidentally met
with

with you, how happily heaven knows, as I shall now have a support in the hardships which fortune may have allotted me to suffer, and which I can now meet with chearfulness.

Thus Clara ended the recital of her story, and I could not but consider it as a most providential circumstance, that our fortunes, which had been so widely separated, should thus unite at the very time when it was likely to be of the greatest importance to our happiness. It did not, indeed, advantage us in the manner we expected, but however defective our foresight was, it is certain, as the reader will hereafter be informed, that our meeting could scarcely happen at a more opportune juncture.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

Which is next after the seventh.

LIFE is chequered with good and ill fortune, and well is it for us that it is so. Adversity, without relief, the spirits could not withstand, but its uses occasionally are not inconsiderable. Frequently has it impeded the progress of vice, and ever does it serve, by its contrast, to heighten the enjoyment of prosperity : an unvaried round of which would inevitably destroy our relish of it, by palling our sensation. As this is the case, Clara and myself must certainly experience a great degree of happiness at our unexpected

ed

ed meeting, so much beyond our hopes; and we fondly thought our misfortunes were almost at an end, or rather we defied them. It was not, however, many hours after I had heard the relation of Clara's adventures, ere an accident happened which undeceived us. This was no other than our being made prisoners by a French privateer, which being out on a cruize, thought our vessel just worth the trouble of carrying home. When the privateer's people boarded us, they thought it safest, as we were numerous, to take some of us into their own vessel; in consequence of which a division was made, and I being apprehensive for Clara's safety, asked as a favour of one of the officers, that I might sail in the same ship

ship with her, and mentioned her as my sister. This request he furlily refused to comply with, and ordered me to remain where I was, and Clara to go on board the privateer. As I repeated my request, he bestowed a hearty curse on me, and an Irish sailor, who served amongst the Frenchmen, cried out to me with some vehemence, Arrah, d——n your shoul, why, you will go together now, only you will be a little sheparate.

I was now in an ill humour, and made the fellow an angry answer, adding withal reproaches on him, for traiterously fighting against his country. To which he replied, that it would be best for me to mind my own business, for if he had me now on shore, he would surely kick me over-

overboard for my fauciness. An officer, who overheard us, commanded us silence, and shook his stick at me. I offered to vindicate myself, and he, finding I spoke French, entered into discourse with me. He had, I found, been bred a scholar, but retained the strongest partiality in favour of his countrymen, against the ancients; and our discourse turning on literary subjects, he gave me a specimen of his taste, by condemning a variety of beautiful passages in some of the best Greek and Roman authors, merely because they wanted the tawdry ornaments which he was charmed with in the works of some of his countrymen. He had no relish for pure natural sentiment, and, amongst the English writers, poor Shakespear felt the

the

CHARLES CHANCE. 165

the weight of his indignation, but these, he confessed indeed, might have suffered injury from the piece-meal translations in which he had read them. The same bias prevailed in his taste in painting, sculpture, and architecture, and I was obliged now and then to a seeming acquiescence in his opinions, altho' contrary to my own, as I believed it might be advantageous to procure a friend in him.

Whether this man was really more happy than graver people, I cannot say, but he was possessed of extraordinary vivacity, and anxiety of every kind seemed unknown to him. After he had talked himself weary, he made some punch, and invited me to partake of it, which

which I did not refuse, and the good-humoured fellow began to sing Chançons chacun un Chançon, &c. not contented till he had exhausted the whole stock of his Chançons à boire, after which, when his spirits were more enlivened by his drinking, he entertained me with proofs of his agility and gracefulness in dancing, in which his performances were really commendable.

Early the next morning we perceived a sail bearing towards us, which the privateers people suspected to be an English man of war, and being afterwards convinced that it was so, they made a signal for those few of their hands whom they had put into our ship, to come on board them, and made preparations for fighting.

fighting. Our guests immediately put out a boat, and rowed up to them, leaving us masters of the ship, but with fewer hands, than were necessary to proceed on our voyage, so that having a stiff gale of wind, and being scarcely able to work the ship, we let her drive, and in a few hours, with a great deal of difficulty, got her into Portsmouth harbour; but before we lost sight of the privateer, the Frenchmen seemed to have altered their intention of fighting, having hoisted all the sail they could, and bearing off as fast as possible. Amidst the universal joy for our escape, I was the only person who was grieved at it; the loss of Clara, who, with several others, was carried away in the French vessel, sat so heavy

heavy on my spirits, that I did not enjoy a moment's peace, and the improbability of ever meeting with her more, almost deprived me of reason. I neither knew the name of the vessel, nor the port she belonged to, and if I had, it was difficult to get her released. I determined, indeed, not to go to America, and therefore went on shore, although without any design what to do, or the least prospect of finding a remedy to my misfortune. The greatest part of the day I spent in sauntering about the town. Weary at last, I entered a public-house, where I was accosted by a person of decent appearance, who finding I had been on board the vessel, which he had seen enter

enter the Harbour that morning, enquired the particulars of our escape.

I satisfied his curiosity, and he in return acquainted me that he had himself been at sea when young, and had several times been in imminent danger of perishing. I remember, said he, when I was on board the Leopard, in the quality of midshipman, we were driven by stress of weather to the southward of Guinea, where we were obliged to send on shore for water, and as we were apprehensive of danger from the wild beasts, which usually range along that coast, none of us were willing to be the messengers. After a long dispute, it was agreed to cast lots, and as I considered that it might fall to the share of some improper

I

persons

persons to go, and I being naturally fond of difficult enterprizes, offered to undertake the business, provided one or two more would be my companions. This offer induced several of the sailors to join in the expedition, lest they should appear cowards, and we accordingly went on shore. We quickly found water, and began to fill our vessels without interruption, till at last we were surprized by a horrible howling of wild beasts, enough I assure you, to have frightened the boldest man living. After listening a few minutes to this noise, the sailors made all the haste they could towards the boat, and called to me to follow them, but I, altho' much astonished at the terrifying noise, yet thinking it shameful to run
away

CHARLES CHANCE. 171

away without seeing an enemy, summoned up all my courage, and grasping a pistol in each hand, stood ready to defend myself against any assault. I had not waited two minutes before I beheld on the side of a hill seven or eight lions, and as many hyenas fighting very furiously. The hyenas, I found, gave way slowly, and kept up a kind of offensive retreat. It is my way, Sir, continued he, to assist the oppressed, whenever I have opportunity. I advanced, therefore, to the place of battle, and discharging one of my pistols at the troop of lions, they started back at the sound, and one of them, I think, was wounded. Instantly I discharged the second amongst them, and they turned tail, and fled to

the woods. My natural impetuosity, you see, Sir, might have exposed me to danger, for if the lions had not fled at the second firing, I might probably have been devoured. But such is frequently the case with men of courage. The lions being gone, Sir, the hyenas seemed irresolute how to act, till I clapped my hands, and pointed after the runaways, as if to have them pursued, when the others instantly took the hint, and followed them full speed, thereby freeing me and my companions from any farther trouble; and we, after having compleated our watering, returned on board.

I was almost in doubt, whether this man was really in earnest, but as he assured me he was, I could not but ask him
with

CHARLES CHANCE. 173

with some warmth, what kind of person he supposed he was talking to, that he could think of imposing on me by such palpable lies and absurdities. To this he replied, that he was sorry for my unbelief, but that all he had told me was really fact, and our landlady interfering, wondered, she said, that I should not believe Mr. Mizen, for that as how she had often heard him tell this story, and her neighbours all believed it; and as how she had heard her late husband (who, God rest his soul, was a great scholar) read in a book, that as how one captain Gulliver travelled into a country where the people were so little, that they climbed upon him by ladders, when he laid asleep, and that as this was all in print,

it must be true; and this was more wonderful than what Mr. Mizen had told me, and besides, she was sure Mr. Mizen would not tell a lye, and so I must be mistaken. Ay, said he, that book is every syllable truth. Captain Gulliver and I were intimate acquaintances thirty years ago, so that you see, Sir, how unreasonable it is for such as you, who have scarcely been out of the smoke of your own chimney, to suspect those who have sailed to every quarter of the world, of telling more than they know. What would you say, cried he, if I should tell you of the water-spouts, and burning mountains, which I have seen in the midst of the sea? Why truly, replied I, I should not think it worth while to say
any

any thing at all to you ; and if you have such tales to tell, I heartily wish you patient hearers. Having no inclination to hear more from this gentleman, and finding, on enquiry, that I might lodge there, I desired to be shewn to my chamber, where I gave way to my uneasinesses, and throwing myself, with my clothes on, upon the bed, lay without sleeping till the morning, revolving in my mind every possible method of searching for Clara, none of which, however, seemed likely to benefit me. At last I determined, as I had by chance learnt the officer's name, whom I had conversed with, to enquire of the French prisoners then in the town, whether they could tell me where he belonged, as this might

probably be of some service to me to know.

I rose early, and finding I could not yet be admitted to the Frenchmen, I walked to the sea-side. The sun was just rising, and its beams glancing on the surface of the water, which sparkled as if on fire, afforded me an agreeable prospect. I viewed the ships at a distance, and amused myself with the hopes, or rather wishes, that Clara might be in one of them, and now returning to me. The improbability, however, of this, soon frustrated the short-lived pleasure I enjoyed from the conceit, and the solemnity of the scene threw me into a profound reverie.

I started

I started at last at the horror of a thought that Clara was no more, which my melancholy had dictated to me without the least shadow of probability. My blood chilled at the mere reflection, and the beautiful scene before me lost all its charms. I walked apace along the beach, eager to dispel the gloom which oppressed my mind, and looking accidentally forward, beheld two men struggling, one of whom, seeing me, called for assistance, on which his antagonist fled. When I came up to him, I found him an elderly man, and so much beaten, as not to get back to the town, without difficulty. I accompanied him home, and was honoured with the title of his preserver, as the villain whom he had

been engaged with, had endeavoured to knock him down, with a design to rob, if not to murder him. The good old gentleman insisted on my staying a while with him, that he might make me some return for the service I had done him, and know to whom he owed his safety. Mrs. Thomson also gave me thanks, in return for the obligation she was under to me on her husband's account; and they both by all the kind behaviour in their power endeavoured to assure me of the sincerity of their protestations. As I was willing to oblige them, I agreed to give them my company all the day, which Mr. Thomson was complaisant enough to call adding another favour to that for which he was in my debt, and on my side, I was
glad

glad that I had gained myself a friend, especially as Mr. Thomson seemed to be a man of fortune; and the agreeableness of his conversation in some degree prevented my reflecting on the singular unhappiness of my situation. There is surely an irresistible charm in good-nature, which is capable of diffusing a pleasing influence on every one around it. Such an effect, however, had these people's behaviour on me, yet I took notice, that twice or thrice, when Mrs. Thomson had looked earnestly at me, tears started in her eyes, which she endeavoured, by turning from me, to conceal; but at length, being very well convinced, that she must have some particular reason for being thus affected, I could not restrain the curiosity I had to

enquire into a behaviour so extraordinary. I made my request in a modest manner, and Mrs. Thomson answered me, Alas, I once had a daughter, whom I think you something resemble in your look. I confess the remembrance of my child, whom heaven has been pleased to deprive me of in an extraordinary manner, hath drawn tears from my eyes. It is more than twenty years since her death, but a late accident has revived my sorrow in its greatest severity.

This account did but the more excite my curiosity, and altho' I refrained from urging a further request, she easily perceived that I wished for a greater explanation. Her goodness would not suffer her to know this, without gratifying my desire,

desire, and she continued her discourse in the following words.

It will not afford you any pleasure to listen to my misfortune, but as I guess you would willingly know the particulars of it, altho' my spirits recoil at the remembrance of those particular circumstances, yet to contribute to your satisfaction, I will recall them, how gladly soever I would erase them from my memory.

Mr. Thomson and myself lived in another part of this kingdom in the earlier part of our lives, and thought ourselves blest in a daughter, who was handsome to an extraordinary degree, and her parent's fondness believed her endowed with every good qualification.

Emily

Emily was our only child, and we had done every thing in our power, by a good education, to make her prudent and virtuous. As we had daily fresh instances of her filial affection, and proofs of the advantage she had received from our instructions, we contemplated in idea our future happiness, when age should have deprived us of almost every enjoyment, except that of being recompenced for our care of her, by a like tenderness and care of us. But how, alas, have our hopes been frustrated! How are we left wretched and comfortless to resist the anxieties and infirmities of age! We had reason to believe that others esteemed Emily's good qualities as much as ourselves, if we might judge from the many
advan-

advantageous offers of marriage which were made her, but which she constantly refused, rather chusing, at least for a longer time, to remain single, and possess the tranquillity she enjoyed with us.

When Emily was about nineteen, she went a month to London on a visit to a relation, and while she staid there, contracted an acquaintance with one Mr. Price, a young gentleman to whom we were entirely strangers. An intimacy subsisted betwixt them during Emily's stay in town, but as we never heard any thing of it after her return, we entirely forgot it, and, 'till after my child had left me for ever, I never suspected the unhappy effects of their acquaintance.

One morning Emily not coming down to breakfast, I sent up a servant to call her, who returned with surprize in her looks, and informed me her mistress was not to be found, at the same time giving me this Letter, which she had found on the table, sealed and directed to me. Mrs. Thomson having proceeded thus far whilst tears trickled down her face, put the following letter into my hands.

How shall I, wretched as I am, inform my dearest mother, what I tremble myself to think of? — Oh, that I could hide it from her for ever! — But it cannot be. — Unhappy Emily! is this the reward for all a mother's love? — How will her heart be rack'd at thy recital!

CHARLES CHANCE. 185

cital! ——— Oh, hide the hated tale, or
let another's words disclose thy shame.

In this letter the young lady had inclosed the following.

My ever-dear Emily!

Would to Heaven I could find means
of coming for you on Thursday, but the
jealous eyes of my father, who I fear has
gotten some knowledge of our correspondence, are watchful over me, but I
have an excuse for absenting myself when
I am to meet you. The Curate has faithfully
promised to be ready when I send
for him, and his church is a dozen
miles distant from my father's house,
so that there can be no impediment to
y lawfully possessing my adorable
Emily.

Emily. By no means fail of being at the place in time; yet I tremble to think how you will travel so many miles alone, and wish you would have accepted of the guide I proposed. But I hope the best, and wish the fatigue of the journey may not be dangerous to you in your present condition. I have not opportunity to say more. — Be punctual to the time fixed, for on that depends our happiness; 'till then, adieu! and believe me,

most faithfully

and affectionately

Your

W. PRICE.

I pe-

I perused these letters, and returned them to Mrs. Thomson. Judge, Sir, said she, what I must feel at this information; yet you cannot judge, unless you are a parent. I got enquiry made concerning Mr. Price, but found he was sent abroad by his father, where I have since heard he died. From this time, Sir, we never heard more of our child, 'till a short time since, accidentally being in company, at a friend's house, with a gentleman who mentioned the extraordinary circumstance of a young lady, a stranger, being brought to bed, and dying at his father's house many years ago, I enquired into the particulars, and had reason to think it was my daughter, part of whose cloaths, which had been reserved,

ved, have since been sent me as a proof. I can assign no other reason for my Emily's misfortune, than Mr. Price's not having been able to meet her, as he had promised.

Mrs. Thomson, I suspected, suppressed the most displeasing circumstance in the account of her daughter's death, or perhaps she was not acquainted with it; I mean the attempt to drown herself, for I made little doubt but Emily must have been the unhappy person to whom I owed my birth. I interrupted the good lady, therefore, by enquiring if her daughter had not left a son, who was educated in the same village where she died, and if the gentleman who had informed her of this was not Mr. Worthy.

To

To this Mrs. Thomson answered in the affirmative, and that she knew not where to find this grandson, whom Mr. Worthy could give her no intelligence about. I had a ring in my pocket, which my generous benefactor Mr. Worthy had given me to keep in remembrance of my Mother, from whose hand he had taken it. This ring I gave to Mrs. Thomson, and telling her it was my mother's, asked if she had ever seen it before. The good lady, who knew the ring to have been her daughter's, looked at me earnestly, and asked my name. The moment I mentioned it she clasped me in her arms, and with tears of joy in her eyes, called me her son, her much-loved child; and Mr. Thomson, who had been present

present all the while, felt no less emotion than her, and embraced me with pleasure; and it will easily be imagined that my joy was not little on this occasion. It is needless to mention the endearments and mutual enquiries which passed amidst a company so happy as ourselves; even Clara remained sometime unthought of.

Mr. Worthy, who was yet in the town, received a pressing invitation to dine with Mr. Thomson, and promised to attend him. In the mean time I acquainted Mr. and Mrs. Thomson with my engagements to Clara, and the manner in which I had unfortunately lost her, and was promised that every possible method should be tried for recovering her, and

with

with these promises I for the present satisfied myself.

Mr. Worthy came as he had promised, and seeing me when he entered the parlour, Good heavens! exclaimed he, who do I see?—How glad I am, said he turning to Mr. Thomson, that you have so luckily found your grandson, when you so little expected it! I always thought, said he to me, that you were a gentleman, and never doubted but it would some time or other be known; you know I always wished and hoped for it. I made no reply to this harangue, not caring to mention the advice he had given me at my parting from him.

The remaining part of the day we passed very agreeably together, and Mr. Thomson

Thomson made me a very valuable present, as an earnest of what I might expect from him.

CHAP. IX.

Which contains more fortunate circumstances; yet without any thing of the Marvellous, which the author does not profess to deal in.

THE next day I renewed the mention of Clara, and Mr. Thomson told me he intended to have enquiry made in every port of France, which it was probable she might be carried to, and at the same time advised me to enquire of the master of the vessel which was going to America, the name of the privateer which

which had taken us, and which it had not entered my mind to do before. Eager to know this, and thinking it almost a certain means of information, I went immediately with Mr. Thomson to make enquiry; when, to my very great joy, I found the privateer which I wanted information about, was just then brought in prisoner by the man of war which had pursued her, and afforded us means of escaping from her. I hastened immediately to find Clara, and, congratulating her on her good fortune, acquainted her with mine, in having found out my relations. I presented her at the same time to Mr. Thomson, who, embracing her affectionately, told her he was extremely glad of her arrival, and insisted on her

accompanying him home, assuring her he now looked on her in quality of granddaughter, and that she should supply the place of his own child in his affections. Clara thanked him for his kindness, and, in a manner peculiarly modest and engaging, accepted his offer, and we immediately returned home, where, perhaps, it might have been difficult to determine who enjoyed the greatest portion of happiness, such part did Mr. and Mrs. Thomson take in our interests. They both complimented Clara on the handsomeness of her person, which, indeed, they must have wanted all sense of beauty, to have beheld unmoved. She received their compliments without that conscious pride which handsome women are apt to assume

assume on such an occasion, and told them she was greatly obliged to their partiality towards her, for their favourable opinion. In the afternoon Mr. Thomson wanted to go out about business, and Mrs. Thomson obligingly left me alone with Clara. The happiness we were now conscious of at our meeting in such circumstances, after such various separations, may better be imagined than described. We repeated our vows of mutual fidelity, and I could not but exult in the fair prospect I had of making Clara my own, in a situation of life fully correspondent to our wishes. At Mr. Thomson's return he brought with him a paper, which he delivered to me, and which I found was a deed by which he made me proprietor of

four thousand pounds in the funds. This, said he, is all I give you at present, as I shall be glad, should heaven spare me so long, to provide for your children myself; if not, I have taken care to make you my sole heir, as I have no doubt of your prudence in the management of your fortune. Mrs. Thomson tenderly wished Clara and myself all the happiness we could desire. And let me request you, my amiable grand-daughter, said she to Clara, to accept a present, as a proof of my respect for you. Saying this, she presented her with some very fine jewels, which had belonged, she said with a sigh, to her unfortunate Emily.

I told Mr. Thomson, that I hoped he would never have occasion, from my behaviour,

haviour, to repent of his generosity towards me, and, turning to Clara, requested, that as I was now enabled to support her in a manner that became her, she would consent, that Mr. Thomson should fix the day for her marrying me, and he kindly joined in the request, wishing, as he said, that he could truly call her his child, and see us settled at ease in the world. Clara thanked him for his intention, and the respect he bore her, but as she looked on it essentially as her duty to ask her father's consent; and as the difference of fortune had been a principal motive with him to refuse it hitherto, she thought it probable it might now be obtained, that objection being removed, and therefore determined first

to ask it; but if, contrary to her expectations, she was now refused, Mr. Thomson should then be at liberty to fix the day for our marriage, if I would still overlook the difference betwixt us in point of fortune. I would have replied, but the good old gentleman prevented me by telling her, he hoped she had no reason for a suspicion, that I could act meanly, and more especially after she had set me such an example, in her own former behaviour towards me. He applauded, he said, however, her filial respect, and would himself accompany her and me, if she chose to apply in person to her father.

I was sorry, yet was forced in my heart to approve of Clara's conduct, and
the

the next day was fixed on for setting out.

The arrival of Mr. Worthy, and two ladies who were intimate with Mrs. Thomson, put an end to our discourse. We passed the evening very agreeably, and I had the pleasure to find, that Clara, both in person and good sense, had the advantage over our visitors, even allowing for the partiality of a lover's judgment, altho' the ladies were by no means deficient in accomplishments of either kind.

In the morning Mr. Thomson, Clara, and myself departed, and nothing occurred material in our journey, till we arrived late in the afternoon, at a village where we intended to stay all night.

Just before the coach reached the inn, we perceived a crowd of people, who

surrounded a cart, into which they lifted a young woman, who seemed very uneasy, weeping and wringing her hands.

Curiosity and pity both incited us to enquire into the particulars of this transaction, and we, therefore, approached the crowd, and Mr. Thomson asked what the woman had done, whom they seemed carrying away against her will. Why, troth, master, cried one of the men, scratching his head, she's a good pretty wench, d'ye see, and kept farmer Guzzle's house, and so his son Ralph took a liking to her, and so he would have had her, but his father, an ill natured rogue, would not agree to the match, and so, as the saying is, they fell to without saying grace, and so, d'ye see, farmer Guzzle, being

being overseer, is going to send her home to her own town, about ten miles off. But they say she's ready to come i' pieces, and some think as-how she won't get home first. But farmer Guzzle did not find it out till e'en now, for he heard her make such piteous moaning and groaning, that he asked her, what ailed her, and so he got it out of her; but the Lord have mercy on Ralph; I do suppose the poor lad will be stark mad about it.

A deed so shocking to humanity as this we could not pass by unnoticed; and Mr. Thomson reproached the overseer (who was the busiest in hurrying away the poor creature) with his barbarity. Why, replied he, if she be here

half an hour longer, we may have a child born for the parish to maintain, and we want no more poor, we are burdened enough with them already. And for what reason, said Mr. Thomson, should the parish maintain the child, since it is your own son's, and when you, perhaps, are as much to blame in the affair as he? Prithee, hold your tongue, Mr. Medler, cried the farmer, and mind your own business, for nobody will mind you here.

By this time the unhappy girl was laid on some straw, and covered with a rug, and orders were given to have her driven away; but as she groaned, and seemed in a deal of pain, Mr. Thomson threatened Guzzle, that if she was delivered on
the

the road, and should not get well, he would infallibly prosecute him, for being accessory to her death. This being uttered with earnestness, and some old women, who stood by, having declared, that she could not be carried half the way, without endangering her life, the farmer, through fear, ordered her to be carried into the house, muttering a thousand curses against her and his son. From hence we proceeded to the inn, where news was presently brought, that the poor creature was delivered of a boy. Clara very humanely went to see that she was properly taken care of, believing the people about her to be none of the most tender-hearted; and Mr. Thomson and myself accompanied her to the farmer's,

in hopes we might be able to reconcile him to the culprits.

Clara, at her request, being shewn up stairs, we entered the farmer's kitchen, where we found him delivering a harsh lecture to his son, on account of his misconduct.

He looked at us with a frown, and sullenly asked our business; which Mr. Thomson informed him was, if possible to obtain pardon for his son and his house-keeper. If that was all, he said, we might as well have staid away, for he knew how to manage his own family without our advice. Perhaps so, Mr. Thomson said, but since such an unlucky accident had happened, the best way, he believed, would be to forgive them,
since

since there was so strong a plea in their favour, as their having been desirous of marrying, could they have obtained his consent, and he would even advise that they might yet be permitted to marry, as the most probable means of making them happy.

The farmer's son now fell on his knees, and begged earnestly that his father would not only forgive him, but also suffer him to wed his dear Sally; but the farmer pushed him from him, and exclaimed, You blockhead, can't I spare a hundred pounds to set you into the world with, and she has not gotten sixpence? Do you think I have no more wit than you? Pray, said Mr. Thomson, is this all the objection you have to this match?

Surely

Surely if you think her qualified to make him a good wife, you will not stand out on such a trifling account. Trifling, do you call it? replied the other; as trifling as it is, and as industrious as she is, (although truly I have nothing to say against her industry) she shall never be my daughter without a farthing to her portion.

The young fellow, at these words, sigh'd heavily, and fixed his eyes on the ground. You have no objection said Mr. Thomson, in point of industry to this young woman; now as I would willingly contribute to your son's happiness and her's; if you will consent to their marriage, and give your son the portion you mention, I'll make your daughter-in-law

law a present of fifty pounds, depositing the money immediately in some proper person's hands, to be paid her on her wedding-day. Troth, said the farmer, if you are in earnest, since things are as they are, why they shall be married as soon as the girl gets well. Mr. Thomson declared he would perform his promise, and the son, who could scarcely believe the good news he heard, fell at Mr. Thomson's feet, and in the most fervent manner expressed his thankfulness. He should now, he said, be happy indeed, and his children should be taught to bless his benefactor. This news contributed to Sally's more speedy recovery, and Mr. Thomson, by this single act, restored happiness to two persons, who had other-

otherwise, perhaps, been miserable for life.

The fifty pounds were paid them by the vicar of the parish, when he had married them, Mr. Thomson having left a bank bill of that value in his hands, and we have since been waited on with thanks by the now happy couple, who gratefully remember the favour bestowed on them.

After we had settled the business at the farmer's, we returned to the inn, and were accompanied by the clergyman, who harangued us on the merits of charity, and commended Mr. Thomson's behaviour, recounted the feuds betwixt him and a neighbouring 'squire, and gave us a dissertation on tythes, and the propriety

priety of receiving them, and exhausted several other topics, to display his learning and oratorical abilities.

We gave Mr. Homily, the vicar, an invitation to sup with us, but he, being unwilling his wife should pass the evening alone, requested the favour of our company at his house, which, as he insisted on it, we accepted, and a messenger was dispatched to inform Mrs. Homily of our coming.

We had only two fields to cross to go thither, and therefore we walked, and were ushered into a neat little parlour, where in a few minutes Mrs. Homily, who had been busied in preparations for our entertainment, attended us. The moment she entered the room, she looked
sted-

stedfastly at Clara, and catching her hand
 eagerly, my dear little recluse, said she,
 what good genius has directed you to my
 cottage? How, cried Clara, my own
 Polly Marway! Yes, returned the other;
 would you have expected that the same
 frolicksome girl, who has so often ferret-
 ted you out, amongst the shady retreats
 in your father's garden, and made you
 ramble where her fancy led her; who
 has so often wantonly snatched your books
 from your hand, and played a thousand
 extravagant tricks to keep you in good
 humour, whilst you have laid aside your
 severity, and engaged in her frolicks;
 would you have thought she could retire
 to this solitary place, and become a grave
 matron and mother of a family before
 she

she was five and twenty? No more, I assure you, said Clara, than you could expect seeing me here, after the unhappy misunderstanding betwixt my father and me. I was sorry indeed, replied Mrs. Homily, for your misfortune, but it was not in my power to do you service.

A little while after your departure, I became acquainted with Mr. Homily; he had just taken orders, and been presented to this living, and we being soon after married, came to reside here, where I can truly boast of enjoying more happiness in his company, and that of my children, than all my giddy frolicks ever afforded me. It is no little addition to my happiness, believe me, that fortune has conducted you hither.

Mrs.

Mrs. Homily then obligingly welcomed Mr. Thomson and myself to her house, and we passed the evening very agreeably together. Clara informed her friend of several particulars relating to her present situation, well knowing how much she had her welfare at heart; and was highly pleased, as I also was, with the innocence and ease which she seemed to possess; and I determined in my mind to seek out such an unfrequented spot for Clara and myself, where our leisure might be devoted to walking, reading, or other peaceful amusements, and our years glide away, perhaps unconscious of misfortune.

When it was time to depart, we took leave of our hospitable friends, for both
whom

whom I had conceived an esteem, although there were some peculiarities in Mr. Homily's temper, which rendered him not altogether so pleasing a companion as his wife, and indeed he seemed not so perfectly contented with his lot as she was. They dismissed us, however, with marks of esteem, and we returned extremely well satisfied with their behaviour.

The next day we arrived at the place of our destination, and Clara dispatched a note to her father, informing him where she was, and in what circumstances, and requesting that she might be permitted to visit him, to ask a reconciliation, and his consent to her marrying me, and mentioned

tioned what she thought necessary concerning me.

Whilst we expected an answer to this, Clara made enquiry concerning her family of the mistress of the house, and was informed that her father had declared he would disinherit her on account of her disobedience, and that it was believed he had done it in favour of Mr. Vellum, who was foolish enough to boast he should be heir to his brother's fortunes. Her father was also ill at this very time, and her mother had been very low-spirited ever since Clara's departure. Mr. Bartlett, she heard too, was married in a month after she had refused him.

In a very little time a verbal message was brought, inviting Clara to her father's

ther's, and desiring that I would accompany her thither, with Mr. Thomson.

Such an invitation promised very fair, and Clara was overjoyed at receiving it. We immediately repaired to the house, where Clara once more had the happiness to see her mother. Their meeting was extremely affecting, as they were inexpressibly fond of each other, and had been separated against their inclinations, without a prospect of ever meeting again; for much as Clara's return had been desired by her mother, it was not in her power to forward it in the least.

When they had a few minutes given way to the mutual joy they had at seeing each other, Clara requested to see her father,

ther, whom her mother told her she would probably not have found alive, had her arrival been a few days later. I will go, said she, and acquaint him of your being here. She did so, and returned with an order for Clara to attend him; in a little time after which, Mr. Thomson and myself were requested to walk up stairs.

We found Clara sitting on the bed-side by her father, who when he saw me, stretched out his hand to reach mine, and in a faltering voice told me, he was glad to see me, and hoped I bore him no ill will for having hitherto refused me his daughter, as he had been anxious for her welfare only; however, he would now make me amends by giving her to me
with

with a handsome portion. I assured him sincerely, that I never thought he had used me ill, solely for the sake of doing it, and therefore had always wished him well, and that I should accept his daughter with or without a fortune, as the greatest blessing he could bestow on me. Clara, replied he, is a good girl, and you are worthy of her; her fortune is her due, and you shall not go without it. I heartily wish heaven may bless you both. And you, Sir, said he to Mr. Thomson, I beg you will accept my thanks for your kindness to my child, om I had, with too much severity discarded.

The sick man excused himself from
 L talking

talking more to us, being weak, and we left him to his rest awhile.

Whilst Clara was relating to her mother what had happened to her since her departure from home, Mr. Vellum arrived, and was, without ceremony, going up stairs to his brother, when accidentally looking into the parlour, the door of which was wide open, he beheld Clara and me. Struck with astonishment at the sight, he stood undetermined whether or not to go forward. Clara perceived him, and desired him not to disturb her father, whom she had just left weary with talking, and desirous of rest. Talking with your father! exclaimed Vellum, and about what?—How, in the devil's name, came you hither?

Now,

Now, reader, that you may be less surprised at Mr. Vellum's exclamations, and know a sufficient reason for the emotion which he was in, it is necessary that you should be informed, that Clara's father, having been angry at his daughter's behaviour, which had been daily mentioned by Vellum, with every aggravation he could invent, had determined to bequeath his fortune to Mr. Vellum, and he having made the will, had now brought it with him for his brother to sign, and expected, as his brother was thought not able to live many days, that he should shortly be in possession of an unincumbered estate, worth about three hundred pounds *per annum*; so that the sudden sight of Clara, who seemed to be on

good terms with her parents, foreboded so ill to him, that he gave up all hopes of success; and his disappointment was heightened, by happening at so critical a time. As Mr. Vellum found it was an improper time to proceed in his scheme, he walked into the parlour, and without deigning to speak a syllable to any body there, seated himself at the further end; we, in the mean time, retaliating his indifference by an entire neglect of him. Whilst we continued discoursing together, I perceived Vellum to listen attentively, and took occasion to insinuate, that we were very well acquainted with the good offices he had done his niece, and sarcastically sneered at him for the ill account they were likely to turn to, which he affected

affected to contemn, by endeavouring at a smile, which, however, nature never fitted him for, so that his utmost efforts produced nothing more than a ghastly grin.

After we had drank tea, which we did without Mr. Vellum's chusing to partake of it, Clara was sent for to her father, and Mr. Vellum immediately followed her up stairs, where an altercation ensued, which was supported with great vehemence on the part of Mr. Vellum, on hearing that his brother would not subscribe to the will he had brought. He was told, that his niece having undoubtedly the greatest right to inherit her father's fortunes, he could not expect to be heir to them, now she was returned,

but that he should have a handsome legacy to ballance the disappointment which he had met with. D—mn the legacy, cried he, turning out of the room, if I can't have the whole, I'll never accept a part. His brother was prudent enough to take him at his word; and having sent for another attorney, ordered a will to be made, by which Clara should be his sole heiress, her mother being otherwise provided for.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

In which this history is concluded.

BEing thus fairly rid of Mr. Vellum, Clara was asked by her father, whether a day was fixed for her marriage, and she assured him there neither was, nor should be, whilst his illness lasted, and that she hoped he would be able to be present at it himself. He replied to this, by telling her, that he was confident he never should be; but was glad she was willing to remain with him the little time he probably had to be in this world. After some time, Clara came down to us, and
very

very obligingly asked my consent, that she should stay with her father a few days, as it would be a satisfaction to them both, and as it was likely in that time his fate would be determined. I could not seem averse to this proposal, and therefore it was agreed, that Clara should remain there, and Mr. Thomson chose to keep me company during the time. I was, indeed, as seldom absent from Clara as possible, altho' she attended her father so much, that I began to fear for her health, as her constitution was by no means robust. The satisfaction which she possessed at every circumstance of her present condition, doubtless assisted her to support her fatigue chearfully; however, I was in about a week released from my apprehensions

ensions on her account, by her father's death. She had foreseen this event, and bore her loss patiently.

My happiness was hereby retarded a long while, during which we resolved, that as Clara's mother chose to continue here, we should also settle in the neighbourhood; and that the rather as Mr. and Mrs. Thomson were willing to live near us.

Mr. Thomson accordingly fitted up a house in the town, and Clara and myself obliged the good old gentleman with our company, when he went to conduct Mrs. Thomson hither, whom we, by this time, were impatient to see again.

About three miles from the town, in a very convenient situation, I erected a neat house,

house, where I intended to reside. Behind it at about an hundred yards distance, where a grove had formerly been, remained a very long vista between ranges of elms of a prodigious height. In different parts of this I took care to have seats placed for one or two persons, in some of the thickest shades, and those chiefly in a manner most suited to the places they were situated in; being formed of rough branches as they naturally grew, selected to suit their different positions, and not smoothed into shape by art. These had a very grotesque appearance, and this place I destined for walking or reading, and have since passed many a happy hour there both alone, and in company with my amiable Clara. Be-

twixt

twixt this walk and my house I allotted a space for a garden, which is laid out according to my own taste. Before the house a green plat extends to a considerable distance, beyond which a serpentine river wanders through a pleasant meadow, and the whole affords a most agreeable prospect. I provided myself with a collection of the best authors in various languages, and prepared the house for Clara's reception, when such a time should be elapsed after the death of her father, as would allow her with decency to marry.

During this time Mr. Vellum, who thought himself injured by his brother, took it into his head to attempt proving the will in favour of Clara invalid,

lid, and that the promise which his brother had verbally made him, in giving him orders to make out the copy of a will in his own favour, would entitle him to the possession of the fortunes he had been in expectation of. He was fool enough to throw away some money on this scheme, and not only exposed his weakness, but acquired the character of a pitiful mean wretch amongst all who knew him.

At length the day arrived when Clara should become mine. Mr. Thomson acted in quality of father to her, and Mrs. Thomson attended us, as did also Clara's mother, to church. The remainder of the day, when we were married, we passed at Mr. Thomson's, and

I leave

I leave it, reader, to thy imagination to judge of the happiness of every individual of this little company.

My charming bride supported her character with becoming grace, and the next day, as we had no inclination for a fashionable excursion to London or elsewhere, we repaired to our little villa, whither our friends accompanied us, and staid with us several days amidst the charming scenes which surrounded us.

Here, reader, have I been blest with the company of my Clara in numberless amusements which render my life happy. Frequently do we walk together in the shady vista which adjoins to our house; and the other rural scenes which surround us, engross a considerable portion

tion of our leisure. The innocent simplicity which characterizes our rustic neighbours contributes to our pleasure and diversion. Occasionally we are visited by some neighbouring friends, but the number of these is extremely small, neither of us being desirous of a numerous acquaintance.

Heaven has blest us with a son, which, if possible, has increased the mutual affection we entertained towards each other.

We are here in a manner sequestered from the world, and can calmly look on, whilst others are eagerly pursuing the phantoms grandeur and fame. Whilst ambition anxiously plans its schemes, or unsheaths the sword of faction, to attain its wished-for ends, and the world is embroiled

broiled in eternal strife, past adversity has so far taught us to relish our present felicity, that we can with sincerity avow, there are at least two persons who are not ashamed to entertain content, and to let their hours glide away in uninterrupted tranquility.

F I N I S.

BOOKS lately Printed for
F. and J. NOBLE.

4 DE 58

1. **A**dventures and Amours of the Marquis de Noailles and Mademoisellé Tencin. To which is added, The History of the Chevalier de Mirmont and Miss Biron. 2 vols. 6s. bound.
2. Apparition: or, the Female Cavalier. A Story founded on Facts. 3 vols. 9s. bound.
3. Accomplish'd Rake; or the Modern Fine Gentleman. 3s. bound.
4. Amanda: or, the History of a young Lady. 3s. bound.
5. Bracelet; or, the Fortunate Discovery, 2 vols. 6s. bound.
6. Bubbled Knights; or, the Successful Contrivances. 2 vols. 6s. bound.
7. Commentary on the Dysentery, or Bloody Flux. By Dr. Akenfide, 2s. sewed.
8. Conflict: or, the History of Miss Fanbrook. 3 vols. 9s. bound.
9. Child's Entertainer. A Collection of Riddles, embellished with a Picture of each Subject. 6d. bound.

10. Devil

